

THE  
MAN of EXPERIENCE:

A  
SENTIMENTAL HISTORY.

IN  
TWO VOLUMES.

*by W<sup>m</sup> Green. A.B.  
late of Christ Coll. Cambridge.*

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VOL. I.

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CHAP. I.

**I** HEARTILY pity the men of this world, said I. By grasping at the delusive shadow of pleasure, they sacrifice the substantial blessings of wisdom; and whilst reason and philosophy lie profoundly buried in the ocean of folly, they absurdly seek for happiness in the momentary gratifications which spring from the polluted source of sensual attachments.

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But

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But what are your thoughts of virtue? said Honorius.

It is a scarce commodity, replied I. However, when I happily meet with an instance of it, I please myself with the reflection that it is its own reward; and as silver and gold have I none, I silently afford it such as I have—the *veneration it deserves.*

Now Honorius was perhaps as singular a character as any the reader has hitherto had the pleasure of forming an acquaintance with.

With a heart moulded by benevolence, he obstinately denied the existence of every moral perfection; and whilst he himself remained an incontrovertible proof of the beauty of virtue, he unaccountably contemned its operations as the offspring of interest, or the secret workings of vanity.

It is a vile world, said Honorius. Look where we will, we meet with nothing

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thing but fraud and treachery. It is just the same all over the globe.

From his childhood Honorious had unremittedly been seeking for happiness. Tired of the pursuit, and despairing of its attainment, he grew morose.

It is a phantom that eludes the reach, said Honorious.

In spite of his peevishness, Honorious, nevertheless, possessed the most engaging qualities: his actions were guided by reason, and his sentiments were the sentiments of humanity.

His youth had been devoted to study. Regular even in trifles, he carefully divided his time betwixt logic and metaphysics, history and criticism. He had read with attention the quiddities of Aristotle, the chronicles of Eusebius, and the reveries of Father Malbranche.

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In all his pursuits Honorius had, however, one ruling aim. He wished to blend amusement with instruction, and from information to deduce happiness.

And yet he was disappointed in the event. Eager for the experiment, he read and read till fancy sickened, and the brain turned giddy with excess of idea.

Psshaw! exclaimed Honorius, throwing aside his volumes, it will not do! There is no satisfaction to be gleaned from an intense application to books. I will for a while bid adieu to this foggy island. Perhaps fortune may afford me that happiness abroad which she denies me at home.

As Honorius was equally as sudden in the execution, as in the formation of his resolutions, in a few hours he found himself safely landed on the Continent.

The

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The politeness, the freedom, the affability of the French, won upon his heart, and gave him every reason to congratulate himself on the wisdom of his undertaking.

This is the land of happiness, said Honorius. It is here the coy goddess has taken up her residence. I have only to court her favour to be as blessed as I can wish.

Friendship, say the poets, is the road to happiness.

Honorius was not unacquainted with the adage. He sought a friend, nor did his endeavours go long unrewarded, as in France every man claims your friendship and every woman your love.

The person selected for so important a mark of his regard was a little spruce *Abbé*. The gaiety of his looks, the freedom of his manners, and the brilliancy of his conversation, recommend-



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ed him more effectually to the esteem of Honorius than if he had came loaded with ecclesiastical honours and papal benedictions.

There was something truly good natured in the *Abbé's* countenance. If his behaviour manifested any fault, it was that of being over polite; his unwearied solicitude to oblige oftentimes subjecting him to the imputation of being troublesome.

And yet politeness is by no means incompatible with sincerity.

*Ab! Mon cher ami!* said the *Abbé*, the instant he first set his eyes on Honorius. My dear friend! how inexpressibly happy am I in this interview! You are exactly the man I would wish to create an acquaintance with.

Honorius, like the generality of his countrymen, was credulous to a fault. He received the *Abbé's* compliments



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as the genuine effusion of a heart warmed into a sense of his merits.

You do me honour, Sir, said Honorius. And from that moment they vowed an inviolable friendship.

As Honorius outwardly displayed all the rough uncultivated qualities of an Englishman, the first thing the *Abbé* undertook was to new model him.

It is not sufficient that you excell, said the *Abbé*. It is not sufficient that you actually *have* merit, you must likewise study advantageously to *display it*. The approbation of one's own mind, it is true is something; but if you would wish to make a figure in life you must add thereto the applause of the world.

By the *Abbé's* instruction, Honorius made a speedy progress in those refinements which prevail in the sphere of fashion. Gaming and gallantry, the two most essential articles in the voca-

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bulary of a Frenchman, he happily reduced into theory, and thereby rendered them subservient to him in his study of mankind.

Qualifications like these could not fail to make his company desirable, nor was the *Abbé* the last to congratulate him on the proficiency he had manifested in attainments so valuable.

You are now invincible! said he, embracing him. Divested of the prejudices of education and the rust of ignorance, you may henceforward rely on a reception from every rank and sex adequate to your warmest wishes.

And yet Honorius's good sense taught him most heartily to despise such superficial acquirements, as trifles too inconsiderable to merit the attention of a rational mind.

But are they not the grand pursuit of the fashionable world? said Honorius,

re-

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rebuking himself. As such, however contemptible they may appear in the eye of reason and philosophy; however destructive to virtue and subversive of morality, they are nevertheless so far necessary, as they lead to a knowledge of mankind, and tend to correct us of those awkward emotions arising from an ignorance of the customs and manners of the great.

As Honorius joined to the gifts of nature and education, the advantage of an extensive fortune, he found no very difficult task to procure admittance wherever his inclination induced him to make the attempt.

The leveè of the prince and the toilet of his favourite were alike graced with his presence. The generosity of his disposition begot him admirers, and the liberality of his sentiments constituted him advocates.

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In all his visits and researches, the *Abbé* was his constant and inseparable companion. Invariably zealous in his professions of esteem, he seemed to have no interest unconnected with that of his friend.

Honorius needed only to intimate his desire, and the *Abbé* was unceasing in effecting its completion.

These frequent manifestations of his regard were not unprofitably bestowed. Honorius paid a religious attention to the grand law of retribution, and the *Abbé* was ultimately repaid a hundred fold.

Their conversation (occasionally interesting) partook much of the peculiarity which signalized their characters. They alternately discoursed of literature and politics, in each of which they strictly maintained the delicacy of friendship and the dignity of manhood.

From

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From politics to religion, the digression was exceedingly natural.

It was, however, a dangerous topic, and such as, with an ecclesiastic, ought not to be indulged without the greatest caution.

Honorius, who was by nature perfectly devoid of those suspicions which actuate little minds, delivered his opinion equally upon every subject, with the boldness of an Englishman and the firmness of a philosopher.

Holding enthusiasm and pedantry in a similar degree of abhorrence, he drew his arguments alone from the source of reason. It was a powerful ally; persuasive without violence, and eloquent without imposition.

The *Abbé* attentively listened to him, and if not an avowed proselyte to the tenets of Honorius, he, however, acknowledged their orthodoxy by a tacit concurrence.



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This deference, which the *Abbé* never failed of paying to his judgment, added permanency to the regard which Honorius had conceived for him, and served more than ever to rivet him in that favour from which he had already reaped no inconsiderable profit.

This man, said Honorius, may, in reality, be termed a friend. Even in matters of private opinion, in which it is possible for the most circumspect to be sometimes mistaken, and where an opposition might do credit to his abilities, with what real delicacy he avoids a contention that in its consequences might injure the friendship we equally wish to preserve !

Honorius was now on the point of exclaiming, *I am truly happy !* when by an order of his *most Christian Majesty*, in the hour of his exultation, he was committed a close prisoner to the *Bastile*.

What



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What a place for reflection !

Honorius found it so.

And yet he bore his misfortunes with the firmness of a stoic.

Incapable of affording a solution to a circumstance so extraordinary, and fully satisfied how ineffectual every kind of opposition would prove, he quietly submitted to what there was no avoiding, and conscious, of his own innocence, was only uneasy at the accident, as it deprived him of the consolation he otherwise might have received in the zeal and affection of his faithful friend the *Abbé*.

Honorius, however, fortunately for himself, did not long continue under a deprivation so mortifying.

By the repeated representations and remonstrances of the British minister, he was once more restored to his liberty, subject nevertheless to the condition

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dition, that he immediately quitted the kingdom.

This stipulation, disagreeable as it was, he was, however, under the necessity of assenting to, and in a few hours he prepared himself, like another Hannibal, to *cross the Alps*.

Previous to his departure, he learnt, to his no small surprize, that it was to his friend the *Abbé*, he was obliged for the late adventure and its subsequent consequence.

What an impostor! said, Honorius.

And from that instant he became suspicious of the sincerity of every man.

The same fatality which distinguished Honorius in his choice of a friend rigorously pursued him in all the various adventures which his capricious inclination led him to embark in.

In Italy, he rarely escaped assassination, for having declared, with more truth

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truth than politeness, that those, viciously inclined, might find opportunities of carrying on an intrigue equally in a church as in a theatre.

In Spain he received no less than ten challenges for affirming that real bravery might find employment independent of a bull-fight.

And in Portugal he was threatened with the Inquisition, for impiously asserting that reason, rather than the authority of the church, ought to be our guide in matters of religion.

Having made the tour of Europe, and completed his travels, Honorius returned to his native country, furnished with unanswerable proofs of the meanness and villainy of mankind, and as remote as ever from the enjoyment of that happiness, the search of which had stimulated him in his ramblings.

Well after all, said Honorius, England in essentials beats the universe. It  
is

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is the land of freedom and the land of science. A well-disposed individual may live here comfortable, and without running any hazard from assassinations, bull-fights; the Bastile, or the Inquisition; and what adds to these singular advantages is, they permit not ecclesiastics to plague them and interrupt their harmony.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

I WISH to Heaven it was in my power to account for the eccentricity of the human mind, merely for the satisfaction of informing the reader what induced me to wander abroad that morning.

A sudden irresistible impulse, impossible for me to afford an explanation of, almost involuntarily urged me on, and before I had time to expostulate with myself on the adoption of so unpremeditated a measure, I found myself in the street.

It was a delightful morning. The sun had just begun climbing the East, the sky was serene; the air temperate; and the whole exhibited a scene, as difficult in the description, as impracticable in the imitation.

“ Thou

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“Thou NATURE art my Goddess,”  
says the poet.

The distinction is just, and does no discredit to the sublimity of his genius.

And yet, how many do we daily meet with, the sole labour of whose existence seems to be employed for the purpose of counteracting the operations of nature!

I pity such men!—

\* \* \* \* \*

I had scarcely passed the extremities of the village, before my eye was of a sudden caught by the distant appearance of Honorius.

He was negligently extended at the foot of a venerable oak. His figure, his features, and the whole disposition of his person, manifested the most striking symptoms of a mind disgusted with the world, and gave the by-stander a  
more



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more immediate insight into the peculiarities of his character, than could possibly be gathered from the pencil of science, or the polished periods of descriptive eloquence.

In his right hand he held a little *Æschylus*. His left sustained his head. The fire, the pathos, the enthusiasm, of the poet, as he proceeded, agitated him in a manner past conception beautiful.

His eye alternately displayed the rage of passion, the prevailing softness of persuasion, the gentleness of love, and the terrific madness of insulted majesty.

As I approached him, I perceived a tear irregularly wandering down his cheek. It was the tear of sensibility, and I envied him an enjoyment so luxurious.

The moment he saw me, he closed the volume that had before demand-  
ed

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ed his attention, and, having wiped away the silent evidence of his feelings, which reflected a grace to his countenance, unknown to the selfish and illiberal, he accosted me with a freedom and politeness which ever distinguish a mind enlightened by education and refined by experience.

Raising himself from the ground, he viewed me with a steadfastness that indicated a desire of penetrating into the inmost recesses of my soul.

I used no endeavour to interrupt his design, but, passively submitting to his humour, waited in patient expectation of the cloud disappearing.

His eye yet swam in surrounding moisture. It was a full dark eye, and beamed with tenderness inexpressible.

Eagerly seizing my hand betwixt both his, he exclaimed in an evident tone of disappointment,

“ This

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This world, my friend, is a cheat!—  
I have long been toiling, with unre-  
mitted anxiety, to find out one motive  
which might induce a rational being to  
covet the enjoyment of it. The more  
I consider it, the more am I bewil-  
dered.

Plodding, crafty and deceitful, one  
half of mankind live by admistering  
to the vices, or imposing on the weak-  
ness of the other. Even the distin-  
guished offspring of genius prostitute  
their talents to this unworthy purpose!  
Is not this a melancholy consideration,  
Euphrastus?

I endeavoured to wean him from re-  
flections so disagreeable, by a reason-  
able descant on the beauties of the  
morning.

The attempt, however, was vain.

I tell thee, Euphrastus, continued  
he, there is not a particle of this vile  
earth but teems with evil :

‘ —’tis

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‘ ———’tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in  
nature  
Possess it merely.’ —

And yet, this is the spot for which  
we so eagerly contend !

It is a prize unworthy the contest,  
replied I.

It is a bubble, said Honorius.

\* \* \* \* \*

As we pursued our walk, Honorius  
relaxed much of his humour. He en-  
tered more immediately into the spirit  
of conversation. It was a fortunate  
interval, and I invited him to improve  
it.

Strange, said Honorius, that the  
accidental allotments of fortune should  
supply food for the vanity of the un-  
deserving !

Yet so it is, Euphrastus.

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Examine into the actions of thy fellow creatures indiscriminately, from the prince to the peasant, and thou shalt find, that man is by nature a tyrant.

Proud, cruel, and aspiring, he only seeks the gratification of his own sordid appetites, and uninfluenced by any great and generous motive, in the general depravity of mankind, vainly endeavours to frame an excuse for his own monstrous rapacity.

The prince tyrannizes over his subjects: and his subjects, God help them! not to be behind hand with their sovereign, discover the natural bent of their disposition by tyrannizing over each other.

It is just the same under every government.—

\* \* \* \* \*

A tall meagre object that instant presented himself to us, imploring our charity.

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charity. He was the representative of Misery ; and yet his countenance bespoke an acquaintance with better days.

In his left hand he bore a staff, which helped to support his tottering frame : his right was pressed to his heart.

A visible delicacy, which prevailed through his whole behaviour, shewed him unused to supplicate.

And yet, we were equally predetermined not to give him a single farthing.

*For the love of God !* said he, bowing as we approached him.

Honorius's hand, by a kind of mechanical insensibility, strayed towards his breeches pocket, with the intention of *securing it*.

*For the credit of Christianity !* said the suppliant.

Honorius was immovable.

*For the honour of humanity !* continued the beggar.

A tear



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A tear which accompanied this last expression, spoke more strongly in his favour than would the tongue of an angel.

No ! said Honorius, this man cannot be an impostor. It is impossible !

Generous, generous Honorius ! exclaimed the son of poverty, as he partook of the bounty of his benefactor.

You know me then ? said Honorius, somewhat surprized.

As did Honorius once the happy Raymond.

Raymond ! Raymond ! replied Honorius : Gracious Heaven ! Sure it cannot be ! In truth but I believe it is my friend, my school-fellow !

I am, indeed, said Raymond, that unfortunate man, who was once happy in the friendship and acquaintance of Honorius.

And by what unaccountable accident, said Honorius, do I find the gay, the

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sprightly

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sprightly Raymond reduced to the necessity of imploring the alms of the charitable?

By the treachery of a villain: replied Raymond. My story is long; nor is this a proper place for the relation.

But a proper place shall be found: said Honorius.

You shall go home with me. I will attentively listen to your story. I will share with you in your misfortunes. And I will, if possible, relieve your distress.

It is great: said Raymond.

It shall be my study to lessen it: replied Honorius.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alas! Euphrastus, said Honorius, addressing himself to me, by what inexplicable ways are the affairs of mortals

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tals regulated ! To day basking in the sun-shine of prosperity, we arrogantly direct our wishes to the clouds, and, trusting in a fancied security, remain unmindful of the gathering storm, which to-morrow, bursting over our heads, destroys our fondest ideas, and levels us with the worm we before trod upon !

“ ————Et celsæ graviore casu  
“ Decidunt turres.”

It is a melancholy reflection, Euphrastus !

And after all, when we have toiled and toiled, to what does our labour amount ? Perhaps, to a paltry pre-eminence, that only serves to render more apparent our own imperfections.

Private, and unambitious of worldly distinctions, a man might safely indulge his natural propensities, whether

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directed to the attainment of good or evil, unnoticed by the million; but the instant he is known, his errors are recorded, his virtues suppressed, and his vices blazoned by the pen of Ill-nature, and hung up as a desirable offering at the shrine of scandal.

He who has merit, has a thousand enemies to encounter. He ought to expect them. Nature designed it in her wisdom as a mark of distinction. It is the test of which every one should be desirous. It is the test of *worth*.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

WE were now arrived at the habitation of Honorius. Plain, simple and unornamented, his mansion had ever been more remarkable for hospitality than for elegance.

And yet it was not to be despised.

Although unsurrounded with the gaudy decorations which proclaim the abode of the sons of grandeur, it nevertheless manifested advantages infinitely more valuable.

Its walls never refused a shelter to the widow and the fatherless; nor were its doors ever shut against the cries of the necessitous.

Honorius, however he lamented the degeneracy of mankind, considered them, notwithstanding, collectively as his brethren. If he censured their vices,

C 3. he

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he, at the same time, administered to their wants. If he condemned their errors, he likewise did justice to their merits.

And yet Honorius steered equally as clear of any imputation of rudeness as of flattery.

The moment we entered his dwelling, the attention of Honorius was directed to his old school-fellow.

It was a proof of his humanity. It was a proof of his virtue.

Honorius did not allow him sufficient time to express his wants. He felt them; and he as instantly prepared to relieve them.

By his order he was provided with whatever his necessities, and the frailty of his nature required.

It was not sufficient that his appetite was appeased: other demands, no less urgent, found their way to the heart of his generous host.



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My friend was not used to be thus habited ! said Honorius.

Raymond blushed at the recollection : it was the blush of shame.

A tear instantly started from his eye.

Honorius perceived it. He became that moment sensible of his error. He endeavoured to apologize for it. He was incapable. His heart was too full.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is incredible how much the generality of both sexes are indebted for their consequence in life to dress. Even an ornament of ever so trifling a nature shall sometimes stamp an importance on the wearer, productive of advantages, for the deficiency of which a man of real worth must live and die in obscurity.

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A ribbon, a star, nay, a gold button and loop, has its peculiar privileges; and without some such assistance, many an aspiring blockhead, who now figures as the patron and protector of taste, must be content to spin out his existence unapplauded, unnoticed and unknown.

But it has ever been the fashion of the world to be governed by appearances.

\* \* \* \* \*

The improvement that was made in Raymond, after his visit to the wardrobe of Honorius, is inconceivable.

He no longer appeared the wretched object who had that morning supplicated our early charity; but new-clothed, from head to foot, he presented us a figure neither deformed nor disagreeable.

His features were uncommonly expressive, and proclaimed an acquaintance with better times.

I readily

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I readily credited the intelligence they communicated, and I congratulated him upon his restoration to society.

Honorius too, joined in the pleasing task. It was a task he delighted in. It was the work of friendship. It was the work of humanity.

He was happy in the idea of having been serviceable to a fellow creature. His happiness was of the rational kind. It was founded on virtue, and infinitely exceeded the transitory raptures arising from libidinism and voluptuousness.

Nor was Raymond insensible of the obligations conferred on him by Honorius.

His looks were eloquently expressive of his gratitude.

It was a language, which, however silent, conveyed the most indubitable

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testimony of acknowledgement, and proceeded immediately from the heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am ignorant, said Raymond (when he had somewhat collected his ideas), in what manner I may best declare my feelings. But words are insufficient to interpret the sensations of the soul, when labouring with emotions of gratitude. Let fancy supply the defect!

Honorius wishes to be informed to what motive he ought to impute the distress which but now overwhelmed me. He desires to learn the incidents which occasioned so unusual an appearance in a man whom he was wont to consider as his equal. If Honorius can in reality derive any pleasure from the artless representations of the unfortunate; if he would wish to participate in the feelings of the wretched,

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 35

wretched, my acquiescence shall not be wanting to promote his satisfaction. Friendship, inclination and gratitude, alike teach me to contribute to the will of my benefactor. Simple and unpolished, my language shall borrow no ornament but from truth, from whom alone I seek for credit, and from whose assistance only I wish for support.

Of my family and connections Honorius cannot possibly be ignorant. The intimacy which so long and so happily subsisted betwixt us renders that circumstance beyond a doubt; I shall, therefore, cautiously avoid an unnecessary repetition of what might subject me to an imputation of prolixity; but, briefly confining myself within the limits of those transactions which happened subsequent to the period at which Honorius quitted college, shall use my endeavours to present him, in an undisguised manner, with every material

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occurrence that may tend to the purpose of unravelling the seemingly-mysterious motives which gave birth to so melancholy a degradation.

CHAP.



C H A P. IV.

I WAS in my nineteenth year, continued Raymond, when I had the misfortune to lose both my parents. A violent fever, rapid in its progress, and fatal in its termination, unhappily deprived me in a moment of a father and a mother, whom I tenderly loved, and gave me to the experience of sorrows which till then I was unacquainted with, even in idea.

The property of which my father died possessed lying principally in the funds, he, in consideration of my youth, committed me to the care and guardianship of his old friend Sir William Trusty. It was a prudent measure; and I doubt not but he was directed therein by a thorough regard for my interest and welfare.

To

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To wean my mind as much as possible from the gloomy sensations naturally arising from reflecting on the recent loss I had sustained, Sir William invited me to pass some days with him at his seat in Northamptonshire. The variety of amusements with which that spot abounds, tended in a great measure to correct me of the melancholy which had taken possession of me, and essentially contributed to the restoration of my usual tranquillity.

A few days after my arrival, the Baronet requested me to accompany him on a visit to his daughter, an only child, then at a boarding-school in the neighbourhood.

I readily complied with his desire, and, at an hour appointed, we set out for the place of the young lady's residence.

Euphemia, for such was her name, was in her eighteenth year.

Perhaps

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Perhaps nature never formed a more finished piece of workmanship.

She was of that slender, that delicate mould which seemed to owe its fashion to the finger of perfection. Her eyes were of a fine blue, lively, full and sparkling. Her countenance at once soft and expressive, and her whole person displayed a grace impossible to describe, and only to be conceived by the creative power of imagination.

What a variable and unaccountable being is MAN! Emotions to which I was till that moment a stranger, rendered me incapable of saluting her, or even of affording her the customary tribute of politeness which her sex and character demanded. The more I contemplated her, the more was my embarrassment increased; and, during our whole interview, agitated beyond description and unable to express myself, I remained the silent and almost lifeless  
repre-

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representative of amazement and stupidity !

The young lady could not avoid remarking the singularity of my behaviour, which, however, she naturally imputed to the contractedness of a college education, and a mind unenlarged by a knowledge and familiarity with the world.

I was happy at perceiving her mistake.

It was a fortunate one.

For had I been assured that she indulged even the most distant suspicion of the real cause of my confusion, it would only have served to augment it, and to have rendered me still more incapable of regulating my actions and behaviour.

Whatever was the Baronet's opinion, or whatever was the construction which he put upon my conduct, he, for the present, kept it to himself, and, having  
ful-

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fulfilled the purpose of his visit, we took our leave, and, immediately after, set out on our return.

It is as impossible to imagine, as to describe, what I felt when I reflected on the scene to which I had just been witness! Every step that contributed to separate me from the lovely Euphemia, increased my despondency, and I arrived at the house of my guardian overwhelmed with passion, anxiety and despair.

Sir William affected the greatest ignorance of the motive which had produced so sudden and unexpected an alteration in me. He was assiduous to cultivate my friendship, and unwearied in his endeavours to dispel the sorrow which so evidently preyed upon me.

“Will you ever, my dear Raymond, said he, continue thus to mourn an event which reason has taught us to live in perpetual expectation of? Fye! such

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such grief is unmanly, and betokens a mind unacquainted with religion and philosophy. You have already fully and faithfully discharged the duty you owed your parents, nor (if it is permitted their purer natures to contemplate the actions of mortality) can they be dissatisfied with the proofs you have already given them of your love and affection. It is now, therefore, incumbent on you to pay some attention to yourself. A longer continuance of a dejection so violent may sap the foundation of your health, and be productive of the most fatal consequences. Banish then, I beseech you, a melancholy so dangerous, and resume that gaiety so infinitely more becoming your youth."

I thanked him for his friendship and advice, but at the same time gave him to understand that it was impossible I could comply with his desire, as my  
sorrow



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sorrow was too firmly rooted to admit of alleviation from ordinary means.

And yet, would I say to myself, why should I despair? Her father may probably favour my pretensions. He at present imputes the return of my grief to the cause which first created it. When he shall be made acquainted with its real motive, his regard for my welfare cannot fail of operating agreeable to my wishes.

In this manner did I reason with myself, and the event determined me to take the earliest opportunity of declaring my passion to the Baronet, and, by his behaviour on the occasion, to regulate my future conduct respecting his daughter.

The resolution was a bold one, and required the utmost delicacy and address in the execution.

One day, as the old gentleman was lamenting the perseverance which I  
ma-

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manifested in my sorrows, and inviting me to unburthen myself to him as to my friend and father, I eagerly embraced so flattering an occasion to execute the intention I had formed relative to an explanation of the cause of my dejection.

“Why would you wish me, said I, to risk the friendship and good opinion with which you have hitherto honoured me? Is it not sufficient that I am myself sensible of my own weakness, a confession of which will most probably draw on me your resentment, and subject me to the reproach of my own mind for having injudiciously disclosed a circumstance so replete with danger? But as you have every right to command, so it is my duty, as it shall be my study, to obey.

“When death had so suddenly deprived me of a father and a mother I loved, I considered myself, Sir William,

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liam, as having no parent, no friend, but you.

“ The judgment which directed my father in his choice of you for my guardian, I highly applauded. It was the result of experience. It was the result of approved wisdom and mature deliberation.

“ I was acquainted with your friendship for that father. I knew your regard for myself. I admired your abilities, and I revered your virtues.

“ These particulars considered, it is no wonder I so readily accepted the invitation you so kindly gave me of accompanying you to this place.

“ Whether I ought to esteem this invitation as fortunate, or otherwise, entirely depends upon the manner in which you may receive the declaration I am now going to make. The enterprise is hazardous ; but it is at the same time

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time necessary. And as you have been, though innocently, the instrument of my present unhappiness, it is but reasonable that you should be apprized of its nature.

“ You have a daughter, Sir William. In *her* behold the cause of my anxiety. From the moment I saw her, I loved her. My passion, in spite of me, every hour increases. In vain I call to my aid the powers of reason and of reflection. In vain I represent to myself my own imperfections and the little probability there is that she should ever be brought to think favourably of me: and in vain I exert every effort that promises to assist me in opposing the further progress of an affection so violent. In a contention of this kind, reason proves ineffectual, and philosophy loses its aim. Judge then if it is without cause that I am dejected !”

I expected

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 47

I expected that so open a declaration would have exposed me to the Baronet's displeasure. In this I was, however, agreeably disappointed.

Having uninterruptedly listened to the address just repeated, he replied to it with a smile, which, as it tended to remove the apprehension I lay under of his anger, so it served no less to assure me of his disposition to promote my happiness.

“And why, said he, ought you to be afflicted at a circumstance so exceedingly natural? At your time of life the passions are apt to take fire. Too frequently they mislead the judgment; and, if not carefully guarded against, oftentimes proceed to vitiate the heart, and to destroy the first principles of rectitude.

“Think not, however, that of *you* I harbour suspicions of this sort. Your understanding will sufficiently paint

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paint to you the deformity of irregular passions and sensual attachments. You want no monitor in a matter so self-evident. You have but to consult your reason, and conviction *must* follow.

“Will you credit me, continued he, if I assure you that, from the first moment I was no stranger to your wishes respecting my Euphemia? With pleasure I beheld the early impression she made on you; and, howsoever I attempted to conceal the knowledge of that particular from a fear of creating you pain, I nevertheless employed every endeavour to draw you into an explanation necessary for the reinstatement of your tranquillity. I have at last prevailed; and shall answer you by a declaration equally ingenuous, namely, That if my consent may contribute to your happiness, be then as happy as you can wish.”

I was



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I was going that instant to throw myself at his feet, unable, by any other means, to express the sense I entertained of his goodness, when he prevented me by exclaiming,

“Hold Raymond! Before I accept of your acknowledgements, it is proper that you thoroughly understand me.

“My consent I have already assured you of. I once more repeat it, that I do not, at present, know a person in the world whom I would so gladly acknowledge for a son-in-law. But do not from hence imagine that the father’s voice precludes the daughter’s right. My child’s inclination must be first consulted before you can expect to derive any advantage from my partiality.

“You are as yet but young. It is my advice, that you return to college, and there pursue your studies for a year or two more; at the conclusion of which period, should you continue in

50 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

the same disposition of mind towards my Euphemia, and she should discover no aversion to your proposal, I shall, with pleasure, use my endeavours to convince you that my regard for your happiness is only inferior to that I entertain for her's."

Notwithstanding this reply ultimately took a somewhat different turn from what I at first conjectured, I nevertheless thanked him for the generosity of his promise, and for the candour with which he had attended to me; and, as I knew how difficult it would be to prevail upon him to agree to terms more favourable to my hopes, I silently acquiesced with his determination, and, in a few days after, took my leave, and set out on my return to Oxford.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

THE expectation with which the Baronet had thus agreeably flattered me, entirely corrected the melancholy that had so lately eclipsed my natural gaiety, and fully restored me to the possession of that peace which was wont to be my companion.

My brother collegians expressed the highest satisfaction at my re-appearance amongst them. They were unanimous in their congratulations, and in their professions of friendship and regard. I readily gave credit to those professions as originating in sincerity; but a very little time convinced me that their adulations were much more directed to the fortune than to the individual.

In conformity with the desire of my guardian, I chearfully resumed my

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studies, which, notwithstanding the interruption they had sustained, were still productive of advantages the most beneficial and solid, and such as I eagerly coveted.

In the midst of my literary pursuits, the idea of my Euphemia would, however, occasionally intrude itself upon my repose. I was apprehensive that she might disapprove of my passion. I weighed her perfections against my own unworthiness, and the amazing contrast made me tremble !

“ Her father, would I say, is partial to me. To that partiality alone am I indebted for his ready compliance. His daughter will, I fear, behold me with eyes widely different. The confusion and embarrassment which distinguished my behaviour, the first and only time my eyes were blessed with her image, could not fail of operating to the prejudice of my hopes. The

con-

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 53

conclusion is natural. It is what I ought to expect !”

The effects of prejudice I knew to be powerful, and, under a conviction so disagreeable, it is no wonder that at times I almost despaired of succeeding in my suit; when I one morning unexpectedly received a summons to attend Sir William, who was suddenly taken ill at his seat in Northamptonshire, which baffled the utmost skill of his physicians, and left very little hopes of his recovery.

I was exceedingly alarmed at this intelligence, and the more so, as he was now the only dependance I had as a friend and a father. To him I could unbosom myself with the freedom and unreservedness of a son. To him I could with safety declare my wants: and, from his regard, I was ever assured of consolation and relief !

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The journey, however, afforded me one satisfaction, as it promised to bring me once more to the sight of Euphemia. That hope served to comfort me in the midst of my affliction on account of my guardian, and administered me pleasure in the very bosom of pain.

Upon my arrival in Northamptonshire, I found my worthy friend and protector stretched upon his bed, almost insensible. He was attended by his lovely daughter, whose bright eyes, shining through her tears, gave an additional lustre to her beauty, and reflected a grace at once engagingly melting and irresistibly enchanting.

The instant Sir William was certified of my approach, a faint gleam of joy diffused itself over his features. Eagerly seizing my hand, and steadfastly fixing his eyes upon my countenance, he pathetically exclaimed in a low voice,

“ Ah,



THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 55

“ Ah, Raymond ! this is a sorrowful meeting ! My Euphemia too ! I hoped to see you united before my death, but Heaven has ordered otherwise ! However, thy will, O God, be done !

“ I have requested your attendance, continued he, for the purpose of bearing witness to my last most solemn declaration. I have now no favourite passion to seek the gratification of ; no interested attachment to indulge ; nor a wish but to convince you of my esteem.

“ From the moment in which you was first committed to my guardianship, I ardently, I eagerly hoped, that I should one day see you matched to my Euphemia. It was a hope enforced by a sense of your merits. I read your virtues, and I wished to reward them.

“ Whether or not my desire will meet with its final completion is, as yet, only known to that Being whose

56 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

penetrating eye investigates with equal facility, events past, present and future.

“Should it be his bounteous pleasure that this my last wish may be indulged: should he permit me the assurance that my Raymond will yet one day become the husband, the protector of my child, I could this moment cheerfully resign myself into the arms of death with peace and resignation.

“However, let me not be understood by my Euphemia as wishing to influence her to an action which may any ways operate in prejudice to her happiness. I desire not to put the least constraint upon her will. It is enough that I advise; I wish not to compel.

“My whole estate, exclusive of some trifling legacies, I have bequeathed to my daughter. It is a disposition I have long since made, as knowing it  
to

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 57

to be the duty of every one to be armed against the accidents of mortality. Temporal affairs ought never to interfere with those of eternity; nor should the moments which are due to reflection, be idly devoted to the less essential purposes of worldly arrangements.

“ You, Raymond, will find that I have paid the utmost attention to your interest, by the manner in which I have managed your fortune. You will have no cause to regret that your father committed you to my care. Exclusive of the friendship which subsisted betwixt that father and myself, the regard which I entertained for his son, was sufficient to bind me to his service. You will, therefore, learn that I have acted for you as a faithful guardian and a disinterested steward. It is a character which, I think, belongs to me. It is a character which it was ever my wish to preserve.

"I will now give you the last present you will ever receive from me, and

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what you ought not to be ashamed of, MY BLESSING. My Euphemia too, she shall share in it. It equally belongs to her; nor will she, I trust, reject the humble mite.

“In whatever manner Providence may hereafter dispose of you: whatever be your destination; or whatever the object of your pursuit, may your honest wishes meet with the indulgence they merit! May the bark of life, unimpaired by the accidents of time, sail smoothly through the sea of prosperity, and may you finally meet with the reward which is alone prepared for the virtuous!”

Having thus delivered himself, he requested us to leave him, as he found himself somewhat heavy and disposed to sleep.

I was greatly pleased with this request, as it indicated a probability that he might yet get the better of his disorder,

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 59

order, and by that means restore peace to an almost despairing family.

Euphemia, who joined with me in a wish so benevolent, quitted her enfeebled parent with a mixture of hope and anxiety so visibly depicted in her countenance, that nothing short of the most confirmed insensibility, could possibly fail of doing justice to her piety, in the contemplation of her feelings.

In spite of her sorrow, her face manifested beauty inexpressible. Her grief, like the delicate touches of a master, gave a softness to her features, which, without diminishing the majesty of her appearance, diffused a grace around her, which it was impossible to behold without emotion.

For my own part, I was more than ever captivated, nor could the solemn scene, of which I had just been a spectator, restrain, in every respect, the violence of my desires, which at times de-

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prived me of the powers of utterance, and nearly hurried me beyond the bounds of reason.

And yet, when I took her hand, for the purpose of conducting her from her father's apartment, my legs trembled under me; my whole frame was convulsed; and I was incapable of affording her even the customary civilities which she was entitled to expect, no less from the character I assumed than on the score of common politeness.

Sir William, notwithstanding several favourable turns which his disorder took, still continued to grow worse. His physicians had already confessed their inability to relieve or assist him. With the utmost fortitude he therefore resigned himself to his fate, waiting in silent expectation of the hour of dissolution.

It was a solemn interval! and such as philosophy might have gleaned instruction from.

He



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 61

He passed it without a murmur, and without a sigh.

The instant his death was announced to us, our sorrow, which before seemed incapable of addition, broke forth with redoubled violence! Artless and untutored by affectation, our tears uncerimoniously forced themselves a passage from the eyes, and proclaimed in terms, stronger and more expressive than words, the situation of our souls in the destruction of our hopes!

Sir William had been to me something more than a parent. His tried friendship and regard had attached me to him by ties infinitely more than filial. He was my director, my Mentor. In him I never failed of finding a friendly adviser, who, devoid of the austerities of a father, participated with me in my transports, and sympathized with me in my sorrows.

And

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And yet, my grief, violent and unbounded as it seemed, was but trifling in comparison with that displayed by Euphemia.

For some moments after she was made acquainted with the fatal event, she stood motionless as the statue of Despair. At length, directing her fine eyes towards Heaven, and fetching a sudden shriek, she fainted away.

By the assistance of those around her, she was, however, presently restored to the powers of speech and recollection, which she used no otherwise for a time than in loud and disjointed exclamations of her loss. "My father! O my father! Where shall I find thee! How shall I follow thee!"

In this wild and immethodical manner of lamentation she continued to give vent to her sorrows, frequently at the manifest hazard of her reason, which  
I be-

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 63

I began to be apprehensive might be impaired by the severity of her feelings.

Having, however, somewhat abated the poignancy of her grief, by a liberal indulgence of exclamations so violent, she imperceptibly sunk into a state of insensibility, and in that condition, unsolicited to acquiesce, and unable to oppose, she was, by the advice of her physicians, silent, dejected, and motionless, conducted to bed.

C H A P.

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C H A P. VI.

HAVING performed the last sad office to the memory of the departed, I naturally expected that Euphemia would admit of a suspension to her sorrows, and thereby afford me an opportunity of learning how far she might be inclined to favour my passion. The religious care and attention which she invariably paid to the recommendation and advice of her father; the resignation with which she heard him utter his last request, and, above all, the known goodness of her heart, unvitiated by an acquaintance with the vain and the worthless of either sex, respectively contributed to the encouragement of my hopes, and to assure me of the probability of my success.

And

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And yet, I was not without my doubts, which too frequently destroyed the flattering prospect which the considerations just recited gave birth to, and plunged me into the deepest melancholy.

I longed for an opportunity of formally declaring the situation of my heart; I wished to possess her with the knowledge of my passion from myself, in hopes of deducing therefrom a favourable reply; and I determined, at all events, to take the earliest season for the execution of so critical a task, and upon which so materially depended my peace and everlasting happiness.

It was not long before I was indulged with an opportunity equal to my wishes. I prepared to embrace it, and I was resolved, if possible, to improve it.

The fair mourner was alone. Her eye was still moist with the tear of affection; nor was the cloud of sorrow yet removed from her countenance.

The

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The moment she perceived me, a faintish blush overspread her features, an emotion which I interpreted into something favourable to my hopes : and yet I dreaded the consequence of a declaration, which, however necessary, was a measure that could not be executed with too much delicacy or caution.

“ Ah, Madam ! said I, when I had sufficiently recovered myself from the confusion which her first look had thrown me into : Ah, madam ! will your sorrows then never allow of mitigation ? Must that soft, that bewitching bosom no more know a resumption of its wonted tranquillity ? And must I for ever continue to mourn with you an event which as sensibly affects me as yourself, insomuch as it deprives me of every pleasure, of every satisfaction which I once fondly hoped to partake of in the friendship and in the confidence of my Euphemia ?

“ Be



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“ Be advised! reject the gloomy ideas which at present so effectually destroy your peace, and give place to reflections more agreeable. Your youth, your beauty, both loudly invite you thereunto, nor is it reasonable or commendable in you longer to persist in a grief, which, however pious, is such as ought not to be indulged.

“ But, alas! in the very moment of my council, in the very instant of my admonition, am I myself wanting of that advice which I am so liberal in the administration of to another!

“ Borne down by the weight of contending passions, surrounded by doubt, and overwhelmed with perplexity, what have I not to fear?

“ Even thou, my Euphemia! thou, in whom is centered all virtue, all perfection, even *thou*, however unconscious of thy triumph, formest no inconsiderable part of my anguish.

“ In-

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“ Incapable of stemming the torrent of desire, which impetuously bears down the powers of reason ; incapable of controuling those violent fallies of the soul which ever and anon break forth and overthrow the finest precepts of religion and philosophy ; I yet fly to thee, as to the deity who is to direct me through the labyrinth in which I am involved, as to the sovereign of my affections and the period of my hopes.

“ Yet imagine not that I wish to avail myself of the partiality of a parent ; or, that estranged to the refinements, to the delicacies, of love, I am only captivated by its more sensual part, as one who foolishly seeks for satisfaction from pleasures in which the heart has no share. Ah ! think not so meanly of thy Raymond !

“ Unless thou, my Euphemia ! approvest of my passion : unless thou canst resolve to return an affection, which,  
abstracted

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 69

abstracted from all gross and impure ideas, owes its existence to a sense of thy perfections and a knowledge of thy virtues; and unless thy happiness and interest be interwoven with and dependent upon mine, even possessed of thee, I should be but miserable!"

I eagerly and impatiently waited some moments for her reply; and, notwithstanding her behaviour, during the whole time of my making the above declaration, was such as gave me no great reason to be apprehensive of a repulse; I yet trembled every limb, and manifested fears which it was impossible, with all my art, to allay, or keep concealed from the penetrating, though penfive, eye of my lovely auditor.

She read my anxiety with an equal degree of pain and pleasure: she pitied my sufferings, at the very time that she rejoiced in them, as they indicated the sincerity of my passion: and she contemplated

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templated them with the more satisfaction, as she was already determined to reward them.

“ Alas ! Sir, said she, in what manner shall I act ? Without a parent to direct me, or a friend to advise me, I am truly incapable of conveying you an answer such as may do justice to my feelings ! Be however assured, that I pay too great a regard to the judgment of my deceased father, to permit *my* conduct to rise up in opposition to *his* will. It was that father’s wish to have us united : it will be your fault if such his desire be not fulfilled. Some time longer, however, is due to our sorrows. It is a claim which is supported by nature. It is a tax laid upon duty by the voice of affection.

“ That debt discharged, I may perhaps have leisure to attend to you. In the mean while rest contented with the assurance

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assurance that you are not indifferent to me."

The candour and unaffected goodness which so peculiarly distinguished her reply, more than ever impressed me into an admiration of her character, and gave me the highest estimation of her excellencies. I was penetrated with a sense of her piety; and I remained unalterably the voluntary captive of her beauty, rendered doubly alluring by the smile of sensibility and the blush of ingenuous modesty.

I was now her constant companion and counsellor. Unpractised in the arts of deception, and unexperienced in those wiles which fraud and treachery too often invent for the seduction of innocence, I courted her confidence only for the purpose of serving her, by combating the melancholy which had taken possession of her, the only probable means now left of restoring her to the enjoyment of that placid serenity which

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which her father's death had unhappily interrupted.

Nor did my endeavours go altogether unrewarded. Fully dependent upon my honour and the sincerity of my love, she unbosomed herself to me with a freedom and unreservedness, which, departing from prudery and affectation, not only conveyed the most unquestionable proof of a generosity unexampled, but served at the same time to heighten those charms which she had before employed in the conquest of my affections.

Her breast too, which had so long been a stranger to the delightful emotions of pleasure and happiness; that breast, which contained the sum of all that was lovely and enchanting, once more confessed an acquaintance with peace, and in that confession essentially added to the transports which her presence inspired, and overwhelmed my senses in a flood of supreme delight, impossible  
for



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 73

for the frailty of human nature long to support.

Thus happy already, infinitely happy in the confidence of her I loved next Heaven, I thought it high time to remind my Euphemia of her promise.

She attended to me with her usual candour; and, after a short struggle betwixt her delicacy and her love, consented to make me the most envied of mortals in the possession of all I had so long been desirous of.

In a few days we were united. Joy, peace and transport, every pleasure and every satisfaction, which imagination could wish to realize, seemed to croud upon us, and each succeeding day only served to present us with some new delight, and to confirm us in the belief that it was impossible for time or accident to terminate, or in the least impair the happiness which every moment gave us to the enjoyment of.

VOL. I.

E

CHAP.

## C H A P. VII.

A T a trifling distance from the scene of our transports, lived Lord Saintly. He was one of those despicable characters, who, under the mask of religion and honour, are capable of the most atrocious actions, and the poverty of whose sentiments can only be equalled by the meanness of their souls.

Our estates joining each other, gave us frequent opportunities of becoming acquainted, which, heightened by the apparent similarity of our thoughts and dispositions, was soon productive of an intimacy, which, on my part, quickly ripened into a disinterested friendship.

With respect to his person, Lord Saintly was tall, handsome and engaging. A liberal education, aided by  
a pleas-

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 75

a pleasing address and an easiness of deportment, gave him a superiority which seldom failed of assisting him in the accomplishment of his schemes, however destructive to virtue; and, by a strange and unaccountable kind of enchantment, transformed the infatuated objects of his villany into the advocates of his crimes.

No wonder then that his pharisaical behaviour, considerably improved by a perpetual prostitution of the precepts of religion, should deceive me into a belief of his piety, as well as into a firm persuasion that his heart was as sincere as his words were pure.

Thus fondly led away by a credulity almost criminal, our intimacy, every hour, increased, and the proximity of our estates rendering such a circumstance convenient, we soon were as one family. One house and one home served us, and

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our only study seemed to be, which could most essentially contribute to the happiness of each other.

Led away by so pleasing a persuasion, I, without hesitation or reserve, opened myself to him as to the man alone worthy of my confidence, and one whose good qualities entitled him to my love, my friendship and my esteem.

As Lord Saintly was a single man, and, as yet, in the bloom of life, I was the more astonished at his manifesting a turn of mind so domestic and so every way contrary to the general bent and disposition of those of his age. This consideration, however, operated no otherwise with me than by increasing the regard which I had conceived for him, and by confirming me in the opinion I had before imbibed of the integrity of his actions and the reality of his virtues.

So

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 77

So far from being displeased at these proofs of my regard, he invited me to increase them, and was assiduous to cultivate and improve the good understanding which mutually subsisted amongst us; a mode of behaviour which I interpreted into something so very foreign to the selfish motive that since appears to have actuated him, that I should have condemned myself as guilty of the basest ingratitude, could I one moment have harboured a doubt of his sincerity, his honour or his probity.

So distant, indeed, was I from entertaining any suspicion of this nature, that I recommended him to my Euphemia as worthy of her warmest esteem, and I was never happier than when enumerating the many amiable qualities which every day still more persuaded me he possessed.

I had the satisfaction to find that she was not insensible to the praises which

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I so abundantly bestowed upon him. It was sufficient that I approved of him, to render him valuable in her eyes. He needed no other recommendation to her regard or to her friendship.

The summer advancing, Euphemia expressed a desire of visiting the metropolis. I had ever made her will the rule of my conduct. It was a sacrifice due to her merits, and, in conformity therewith, I instantly gave orders for the necessary preparations.

As we were unprovided with a house in town, Lord Saintly politely requested us to make use of his, an offer which we embraced with the more satisfaction, as, greatly superior to our expectations, he proposed being of our party.

Enlivened by those sprightly and agreeable fallies which tend to divert the fatigue of travel, our journey was short and delightful. The roads were pleasant; the weather was inviting; and  
nature



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nature, on either hand, exhibited a scene, such as it was impossible to contemplate without a mixture of wonder, joy and transport.

Towards the decline of a fine day, we arrived in London. Lord Saintly welcomed us to his house, which was desirably situated at the west end of the town, with so apparent a frankness and good humour, that, for my part, I was more than ever captivated with his behaviour, which I gratefully construed into a combination of every thing generous, manly and polite.

Not contented with the many civilities, which he had already bestowed upon us, he eagerly embraced every opportunity of obliging us, and was particularly studious in his endeavours of administering all in his power, to our satisfaction, and to our entertainment.

He accompanied us to all places of popular resort, where he was at once

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our guide and our interpreter ; and took a singular pleasure in introducing us to the acquaintance of those whose rank and condition made us fully sensible of the honour he was desirous of conferring on us.

It is true, I had never been an advocate for company. I rather preferred the cool, the tranquil path of life, to all the hurry and glare of fashion and grandeur, and considered the friendship and conversation of one plain man of sense, as infinitely more valuable than the warmest professions of dignified pride or overweening opulence.

Nevertheless, as it should seem that Lord Saintly was himself somewhat interested in the event of such connections, we did not aim to discourage them, but on the contrary, readily assisted in their formation, as wishing rather to adopt a custom, however unworthy our imitation, than, by an obstinate and untimely  
perfe-

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 81

perseverence, subject ourselves to a charge of affectation and singularity.

The frequent and repeated invitations we, by this means, received, and the many agreeable parties we helped to compose, soon gave us a relish for those pursuits which constitute the happiness of the fashionable world, and made us no longer see that excess of refinement in a life of domestic ease, which we were once taught to think existed there alone.

This sudden change in our sentiments, how much soever it might conduce to our disadvantage, when considered in a moral sense, did us, in fact, less harm than could readily be expected.

Engrossed as we undoubtedly were, by the variety and novelty of the scenes of which we so recently had become spectators, we nevertheless, uniformly and invariably, maintained the same love and affection towards each other, which

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first actuated us ; and, amidst a life of seeming dissipation, still inwardly exulted in the reflection, that, neither time nor accident had, in the least, diminished the fervour of a passion, which was founded on the best and purest of all motives,—that of mutual esteem.

With hearts thus divided, betwixt love and pleasure, it is no difficult task to conclude that our fancy found full employment. Unvitiated by the fashionable examples which on every side abundantly offered themselves to her view, my Euphemia possessed a delicacy of thinking which taught her to despise them. She had ever considered those errors, which are only censurable in the vulgar, as unpardonable in the great, and, under that persuasion, recoiled with abhorrence from whatever bore the semblance of vice or wantonness.

Fully

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Fully sensible of her virtues and perfections, as well as of her love and tenderness, I exerted every ability for the purpose of convincing her of my gratitude. She had the most undeniable claim to it, and I, even now, enjoy no trifling satisfaction in the reflection that she possessed it.

Lord Saintly, who had never slackened in his civilities, and who seldom quitted us, but in cases of absolute necessity, began now, to our no small concern, to manifest symptoms, which, from their novelty, the more particularly alarmed us.

My Euphemia was the first to perceive it. Her refined penetration and discernment, watchful without intermission in the defence of her honour, readily led her to a discovery which filled her with the most poignant uneasiness.

Lord Saintly loved her.

E 6

His

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His eyes, his actions, his whole behaviour, proclaimed a truth so important.

The soft glance, the tremulous accent, the involuntary sigh, and the eager, the steadfast gaze, all, all convinced her of the justice of her suspicions.

And yet she hesitated, as doubting whether or not she ought to communicate to me the observations she had made.

“The experiment will be attended with danger!” said she.

A conclusion of this sort was equally natural and just. It did no less credit to her judgment than to her humanity.

I spared her the trouble, however, of revealing her remarks, as it was impossible his passion could long escape my notice.

In



THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 85

In truth, it was not without pain that I purchased a knowledge so disagreeable. I was disappointed, I was astonished, and I was confounded!

“ We will fly, my Euphemia, we will fly! said I. Lord Saintly is, by nature, of a noble and generous disposition. His susceptibility of soul ought not to be reckoned to his disadvantage. We only are to blame; and we only ought to be the sufferers.

“ Is it to be expected that eyes like his should behold, with indifference, the charms of my beloved? or that a heart, warm, tender and full of desires, could resolve to stifle the fond emotions which her beauty must necessarily have created? Alas! my Euphemia, this were to form expectations no less contrary to our nature, than absurd in themselves.

“ Nothing, therefore, remains, but that we instantly bid adieu to an habitation,

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tation, where our presence can possibly be productive of little else than unhappiness. A short absence will, doubtless, effect that cure which religion may be inadequate to, and thereby check the further progress of a passion which is much more unfortunate than criminal.

“ This measure, once accomplished, Lord Saintly will acknowledge the necessity of it : he will behold, with horror and astonishment, the precipice which was before him : he will rejoice at his escape : and he will thank us for being thus instrumental in preserving him from destruction.”

It was with pleasure I perceived that Euphemia approved of my arguments. She was even more solicitous with me for the adoption of a step so evidently prudential, than my fondest hope could have suggested. This, I received, as a confirmation of her love ; and, in order that

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that no proof should be wanting, on my part, to convince her of the reality of my affection, I proposed, without delay, to make the necessary preparations for our removal.

CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

“AND yet, thought I, why ought I thus rashly, and almost inconsiderately, to fly from a man, whose conduct towards me, has been uniformly and invariably generous and polite? Should I quit him, without first assigning a reason for it, will he not justly have cause to upbraid me as an ungrateful wretch, undeserving of his friendship? as one, who, meanly taking advantage of a weakness which charity might excuse, returned evil for good, and repaid the liberality I was unworthy of receiving, with pain and sorrow? Far, very far from me, be so ungenerous an act!

“It is most true that he has conceived a passion for my wife. Every circumstance confirms it; but whilst  
his

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 89

his wishes are yet confined in silence, there is no danger to be apprehended from it. At worst, it can only be deemed an error of youth : the involuntary lapse of a heart too prone to sensibility. Mistakes of this sort are common; they are compatible with the frailty of our nature ; and, as such, are infinitely more deserving of pity than reprehension.

“ What then am I going to do ? Instead of continuing with him as a friend, and pointing out to him the evils which necessarily result from passions so destructive ; instead of assisting him in the conquest of his desires, and propping his declining virtue, I am hastening to leave him, and that too in a moment when my aid and counsel are the most materially requisite.”

Whilst I thus expostulated with myself, indeterminate and irresolute, and  
alto-

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altogether unmindful of the arguments which I had just before made use of to Euphemia, Lord Saintly came to request that I would accompany him to a sale of pictures, some of which he was desirous of purchasing.

A favour so inconsiderable was what I could not have refused, even to the solicitation of an enemy.

Accordingly, and without hesitation, I expressed a willingness to oblige him; and, in a few minutes, we set out for the place of sale.

The room was exceedingly crouded.

The reputation of the paintings (the majority of which was the production of the greatest and most esteemed masters) had been the means of assembling together a mixture of real and pretended admirers of the fine arts, whose remarks and observations, to which I closely attended, served, in a great measure, to relieve my mind of an unusual weight



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 91

weight that oppressed it, and, at the same time, fully restored me to a relish for the charms of society.

I soon perceived that Lord Saintly was in the very circle of his acquaintance. I am not naturally of a temper apt to entertain suspicion, otherwise the appearance of more than one, with whom his Lordship was evidently on a footing of the utmost familiarity, might have given me no little cause of dissatisfaction; and, indeed, might have readily justified me in distrusting their pretensions to honour, or even to common honesty.

My very trifling knowledge of the world, however, rendered me blind to a token so natural and characteristic, and induced me to impute *that* to my own ignorance of mankind, which ought, with more justice and propriety, to have been attributed to real penetration and discernment.

As

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As the day was considerably advanced, before the sale was concluded, Lord Saintly, at the instance of a few friends, proposed to adjourn to a tavern in the neighbourhood to dinner.

This proposal, how much soever disagreeable to me, I was unable to oppose, as I could not hope that the arguments of an individual might make any impression upon a whole body collectively, more especially as they had already declared which way their inclination urged them. I was, therefore, much against my will, constrained to yield my assent to what there was no avoiding with propriety; and, without informing the company of my sentiments, I insensibly followed them to the scene of my destruction.

Dinner being ended, which was the first I had sat down to, unaccompanied by my Euphemia, since the period of our marriage, the glass circulated with

a velocity to which I was unaccustomed.

I endeavoured to avail myself of every necessary precaution, which my knowledge or memory furnished me with the recollection of, for the purpose of avoiding the danger of intoxication; the consequences of which I was the more apprehensive of, from the consideration of having hitherto invariably lived a life of the strictest sobriety,

In spite, however, of all I could do; in spite of every effort of prudence and of cunning, my senses were visibly forsaking me; my reason began to stagger; my faculties were impaired; and I was soon rendered nearly destitute of speech and of reflection.

Whilst I was unhappily in this condition, incapable of forming a right conception of the horror of my situation, or of perceiving the ruin which threatened

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threatened me, one of those infernal instruments of seduction, who attended us, and whose brain was never idle in the cause of vice, proposed that the company might amuse themselves till supper time with a game of whist.

The proposal meeting with no opposition, cards were immediately introduced, and a party being as readily formed, I sat myself down as a mere uninterested spectator, and directed my attention to the players.

Fortune, as is her usual method, capriciously and wantonly shifted from side to side, so that it was almost impossible to determine, long together, when or with whom lay the advantage; a circumstance which bore great weight with me, and tended materially to convince me of the honour of the contending parties.

This persuasion, indeed, made so firm an impression upon me, that I shewed

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shewed not the least objection (when requested, at the conclusion of a game) to supply the place of one who had expressed a desire of resigning his seat.

Heated with wine, and unable to regulate my passions, by calling to their aid the powers of reason, I wildly and inconsiderately rushed into absurdities which were as unpardonable as incredible.

The ready money I had with me, inconsiderable in itself, was soon, very soon disposed of, as was also an additional sum I borrowed of Lord Saintly.

My folly increasing with my ill fortune, I rashly accepted every bet that was offered me; and, in consequence of a proceeding so injudicious, I very shortly received the disagreeable assurance that my losses amounted to a sum truly enormous.

As

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As it was inconvenient, and, indeed, almost impossible for me immediately to answer those demands, my fortunate adversaries, at the motion of Lord Saintly, consented to accept of my bond; an indulgence which I considered as something equally polite and generous; and, under that belief, willingly subscribed my name to three several instruments, which had been previously prepared, and which, as soon as executed, were delivered, for the security of the parties in whose favour they were drawn.

After an action so ripe with matter for reflection, it cannot be supposed that I had much appetite for supper.

In truth I had not.

But secretly cursing his Lordship as the author of my folly and intemperance, I made all the expedition I could to leave a place so pregnant with destruction



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 97

tion, and, in a disposition of mind, little short of madness, very late at night, I once more reached the residence of my Euphemia.

## C H A P. IX.

I HAD now leisure for reflection. Restored, effectually restored to the use of reason, and to the enjoyment of my senses, I was taught to behold my conduct in a light very far from commendable. Every recent instance of error or of guilt rose upon my fancy in colours, which, adding to my affliction, almost hurried me to the gates of Despair.

“ Wretch ! said I to myself, how truly undeserving art thou of those powers, and of those faculties, thou boastest thyself possessed of ! Incapable of opposing the torrent of passions which overwhelm thy reason and debase thy understanding, what art thou better than a beast ? Thy wife too ! Injured as she is, how wilt thou be again able  
to

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to meet her? Were ruin and beggary the only reward thou couldst bestow in return for her unexampled love and tenderness? And did she merit such treatment from *thy* hands? No! Fool! Fool! Fool! Hell itself contains not a monster like thee!"

In this manner did I accuse myself; and, after this sort, were my thoughts employed, when I was interrupted, from the further prosecution of them, by the sudden and unexpected entrance of my wife.

She had been long waiting my return, with an impatience which nothing less than a real and sincere regard could inspire.

But how did I behold her?

As a criminal, who was sensible how little he deserved mercy, might an inexorable judge; or, as a sinner his offended Deity.

F 2

She,

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She, on the contrary, smiling like the effulgence of Heaven, and unacquainted with the knowledge of affecting a transport in which the heart has no share, received me with a pleasure to be conceived alone by those who love with a delicacy and purity of passion equal to that which then actuated her.

A kindness so apparent, and which I was conscious I had done so little to deserve, instead of affording me the satisfaction, which, at any other time, it could not fail of bestowing, served only to increase my perplexity, by calling to my mind the remembrance of my indiscretion, and making me thereby the more sensible of my folly and ingratitude to her, who was most worthy of my love and everlasting esteem.

I, however, exerted all my endeavours, for the purpose of disguising

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my feelings : I even went so far as to attempt to return her smiles and her endearments. But, alas ! my mind was too ill at ease, and my behaviour of too singular a nature to favour the deceit, or to keep my uneasiness long a secret from the penetrating eyes of my Euphemia.

The moment she saw me, she concluded that something extraordinary had happened thus to disturb my tranquillity. The inference alarmed her fears ; and her imagination was immediately set to work, with a view of investigating the cause.

Notwithstanding the concern which she displayed, and the aggravated pain which I endured in the contemplation of her sufferings, on my account, I yet could not determine with myself to make her acquainted with the real motive of my grief. I wished to satisfy her, and yet the consequence of a dis-

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covery so dangerous, terrified me from the attempt.

“ No ! said I, she shall not as yet learn the secret of my indiscretion. Rather let me debar her from the knowledge of a circumstance, which, happen when it will, must inevitably yield her up a sacrifice to affliction. It is most true, I have been imprudent, highly imprudent. Time and œconomy may, however, yet get the better of my embarrassments, and thereby avert the present too probable consequences of a misconduct so gross.

“ Why then should I anticipate misfortune ? Why make her acquainted with that which can only give her pain ? Such a mode of proceeding might justly be deemed the perfection of folly, nor could any pretence whatever serve to justify so impolitic a discovery.”

The



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The perturbation of mind which I had so long endured, augmented by the consideration of the uneasiness I had unhappily been the instrument of affording her I loved, not only deprived me of rest, but otherwise so affected me, that, in the morning, I was pronounced to be in a high fever.

My delirium, instead of abating, increased to so violent a degree, that the physicians who attended me were filled with apprehensions the most alarming. Every effort of their skill, and of their care was exerted in my behalf, and, notwithstanding which, during a period of six weeks, their endeavours were repaid with but very little hopes of my recovery.

As I was, however, by nature gifted with an uncommon strength of constitution, I, at length, after many changes and revolutions, and having suffered under every variation of a distemper so dangerous, regained my

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senses, sufficient to recollect the particulars of what had happened.

This naturally raised in my mind the memory of my Euphemia, whom, after silently and anxiously waiting some hours in expectation of seeing, and without effect, I began to make some enquiries about.

The information I received, in answer to those enquiries, did not, however, tend much to promote either my ease or satisfaction: on the contrary, I learnt, that, a few days subsequent to the date of my indisposition, she had accompanied Lord Saintly back into Northamptonshire; and *that*, without expressing any desire of having me of the party.

“ Ah then, said I, she is unquestionably made acquainted with the history of my follies. She has gained a knowledge of my weaknesses, and she justly despises me on their account !”

I was,

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I was, nevertheless, determined, the instant my health permitted, to set out in search of her; nor did I doubt of prevailing with her to overlook my indiscretion, as owing its birth to the hour of involuntary intemperance, rather than as arising from a mind habituated to evil.

My strength now every day increasing, and my physicians favouring me with the assurance that I might safely undergo the fatigue of the journey, I wanted but little persuasion to be prevailed upon to attempt it.

Taking with me only one servant, and making the utmost expedition, I, accordingly, in a few hours, reached the place which had so often borne witness to my happiness, and which hitherto had been the scene of joy, peace and transport, undisturbed by care, and uninterrupted by crosses.

## C H A P. X.

NO sooner was I arrived at the spot, for a sight of which I had so long and so ardently sighed, than I enquired of my domestics, with a visible and a fond impatience, if they could inform me of my Euphemia? And, without waiting for their reply, ordered them to conduct me instantly to her.

Equally amazed at this enquiry, and at the command which accompanied it, they stood silently staring at each other some moments, as if doubtful of my sincerity, or incapable of divining my meaning.

But, gracious Heaven! what were the emotions of soul, when they at last assured me, in a manner which left me no room to question their truth, that they were, in every respect, ignorant of her

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her residence, having never seen her since the time of our departure to London!

It is impossible for conception to form the most distant idea of what I suffered on receiving this intelligence.

It was like the stroke of death.

It instantly deprived me of my senses; whilst all my faculties were suspended in wonder and admiration!

“ Ah then, said I, when I had somewhat recovered myself, it is too plain that she hates me, or she would not thus absent herself from me. Could I but see her, persuaded as I am of her tenderness, I doubt not but I should yet be able to regain her affections, without which, life at best is a load which I care not how soon I resign.”

The first measure which I determined upon, was, to pay a visit to Lord Saintly, who, I was given to understand, was in the neighbourhood, and deported him-

self with a reserve as unaccountable as it was singular.

I had not seen his Lordship since the time I had left him so precipitately at the tavern, surrounded by the infernal instruments of my undoing. Nor did the eagerness which he manifested at that juncture, in his endeavours of profiting by my infatuation, afford me that satisfaction which I flattered myself with continuing to derive from his friendship and disinterested regard.

The mean and unworthy advantage he then took of my condition, which ought rather to have awakened his pity and compassion, served, however, to convince me that his heart was not altogether so destitute of those vices which obliterate the idea of human excellence, as his precepts would lead us to believe.

Nor did the knowledge of his partiality for my wife, in the least tend to eradicate



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eradicate the unfavourable impression which his conduct had been the means of stamping on my mind.

In truth, I began to form many very disagreeable reflections, relative to his Lordship's behaviour, every one of which confirmed me the more in the belief that it was by his cunning and contrivance, that Euphemia was thus secreted from my knowledge.

This persuasion almost drove me distracted ; nor was I without a secret hope that circumstances might opportunely arise to justify me in upbraiding him for the meanness and turpitude of his actions, which every moment still more convinced me was habitual to him.

And yet, I harboured no suspicions of my wife.

Jealousy was a passion which my soul was unacquainted with, and which, of all others, I had ever held in contempt.

Besides,

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Besides, the many excellent and amiable qualities which my Euphemia was the undoubted mistress of: her virtues, which were hereditary; and the natural and unaffected goodness of her heart, were, of themselves, sufficient to prevent the operation and interference of an evil so pernicious and destructive.

The long experience I have gained of her perfections, obliges me thus to do justice to them. It is the testimony of truth. It is the attestation of a heart warmed into a sense of her merits.

Upon reaching Lord Saintly's house, which I before observed was contiguous to mine, I unceremoniously and suddenly presented myself before him unhoped for and unexpected.

He was alone.

The moment he perceived me, his behaviour was such, as could not fail of manifesting to the most unobservant specta-

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 111

spectator, that my presence distressed him.

His countenance, in an instant, shook off the roses which nature had implanted there, and gave way to a deadly paleness, accompanied with every mark of confusion and embarrassment.

It was the signature of conscious guilt.

“Where, my, Lord, said I, is my wife? Where is my Euphemia? If you are privy to her concealment, generously restore her to me! My life, my hopes, my happiness depend upon your answer!”

“What mean those questions? replied he, affecting a surprize. Did you commit her in trust to me? Or am I to be answerable for any folly or misconduct she may have been guilty of.”

“Ah! give it not so rash an epithet, said I, interrupting him. My Euphemia is as much incapable of the weaknesses

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nesses of her sex, as she transcends them in every outward grace and accomplishment. Nor is she deserving of a charge so gross. Take back, therefore, my Lord, the ill-timed expression, and know that I am determined to gain that knowledge by force, which I would much rather stand indebted for to your Lordship's courtesy."

"Beware, Sir, replied he, how you urge me upon a point of so delicate a nature! My honour has been hitherto unimpeached; nor can I readily brook those groundless jealousies which so directly tend to injure it. Be assured, that I am an utter stranger to whatever concerns her who is the subject of your enquiries. Let this assurance satisfy you of my innocence. In the mean time, if I can assist you in finding her, you need only instruct me."

Confounded at the apparent dissimulation with which he concluded his reply,

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reply, I was, for a considerable while, unable to answer him.

The more I reflected on his behaviour, the more powerfully was I persuaded of his hypocrisy, and that his knowledge was not altogether so confined as he represented it to be.

Eyering him, therefore, with a look, which might be said to penetrate into the inmost recesses of his soul, I calmly rejoined,

“ Had I not, my Lord, the most unquestionable proof; was I not in possession of the fullest and completest evidence of the contrary, and *that* from your own servants, I might perhaps be inclined to afford some degree of credit to your Lordship’s declaration.

“ But, my Lord, I am sufficiently assured, in spite of every allegation, and in spite of every artifice which deception may devise, that your Lordship  
was

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was the companion of her retreat. Add not, therefore, insult to injustice, but consider, my Lord, that the honour of a husband is of too serious a nature to bear trifling with."

"Are you then determined to persevere in so false and so injurious an accusation? said he. But, remember Sir! you may most probably repent of this pertinacity."

"I despise your threats, my Lord! replied I. And since neither the voice of friendship, nor the obligations of humanity can make any impression upon your Lordship: since you are equally a stranger to that candour, and to that generosity which constitute real greatness; and since your present conduct so fully manifests that your soul is incapable of entertaining those feelings which do honour to manhood; know, that I have yet *one* method left, which shall



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shall *compel* you to do me the justice I demand.

“ This sword, my Lord ! it is my last and only resource. This sword shall extort from your Lordship a secret upon which depends my repose. Prepare therefore to defend yourself, continued I, unsheathing it, for equivocation will no longer avail.”

Finding that I was in earnest, and that there was apparently no possibility of evading the rencounter, but by a confession which would subject him still more to my contempt, he made a virtue of necessity, and appeared as eager for the engagement as my most sanguine wish would have him.

My skill and address being, however, much superior to his, and as my cause was strengthened by justice and equity, after a few passes, I disarmed him, and he lay alike open and exposed to my mercy or resentment, too haughty to  
implore

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implore the former, and too weak to oppose the latter.

The noise which this affair unavoidably occasioned, immediately gave the alarm to the servants, who burst in upon us at the very moment in which I could hope or expect to profit by the advantage which fortune had thus happily favoured me with.

Enraged at so unwelcome an intrusion, my anger seemed to know no bounds. My nerves trembled with excess of passion ; my teeth insensibly adhered to each other ; my eyes flashed fire, and my whole frame was convulsed.

Desperately directing, therefore, my indignation against those who had so rudely robbed me of my revenge, I indiscriminately attacked them collectively, till, overpowered by superior force, I was myself in turn disarmed : and, to complete my vexation, found myself in the very centre of conquest, in the very instant

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stant of victory, striped of my triumphs,  
and deprived of the means of being  
satisfied of the situation of her, for  
whose sake alone I wished to preserve an  
existence, which, without her, was  
burthenfome and insupportable.

## C H A P. XI.

BAFFLED thus in my pursuits, and disappointed in all my hopes and expectations, I quitted the habitation of Lord Saintly, and hastened home in a state of mind more easy to be conceived than described.

The chain of circumstances which concurred to cross my design, and the continued series of unfortunate events, every one of which augmented my anxiety, hurried me almost to madness, and rendered me destitute of sense and of reflection.

Whilst the noblest faculties of the soul were thus lost in a whirlwind of frenzy, my attention was, in a moment, called home by the appearance of Lord Saintly, who, with a number of his dependants and followers, had forced themselves upon my privacy, and surrounded

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rounded me before I had time to demand of them the nature of so unexpected a visit.

This ceremony was, however, rendered unnecessary by the favour of their leader, who, holding in his hand a written instrument, and which I instantly discovered to be one of those I had subscribed on the unfortunate night of my ebriety, asked me, with a look of malignant pleasure, if I acknowledged the signature.

Persuaded that his business was simply to demand the payment of a sum of money, and considering him more than ever as the object of my contempt, I made no hesitation to grant him the acknowledgment he required, which I had no sooner done, than, presenting me with a copy of it, he desired me to peruse it.

But Heaven and earth! how was I confounded, when, upon inspection, I found

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found it to contain, “ A DEED OF GIFT  
of all my estate, real and personal, to  
LORD SAINTLY, and to HIS HEIRS,  
FOR EVER !”

Astonished, beyond conception, I was  
unwilling to give credit to the testimony  
of my senses. I read it over and over  
again, and the more I did so, the more  
strongly did I flatter myself, that the  
whole was a dream.

Besides, I was unable to account for  
the manner of executing so fraudulent  
a transaction, having ever made it a rule  
carefully to examine whatever I sub-  
scribed my name to; a circumstance  
which I was confident I had not ne-  
glected on the present occasion, not-  
withstanding appearances seemed to  
argue so immediately to the contrary.

I had not much time, however, allowed  
me for these cogitations, unsatisfactory  
as they were, being interrupted therein  
by Lord Saintly, who peremptorily  
com-



commanded me, with unpardonable insolence, to quit the house to him *the legal owner of it*.

Provoked at such injustice, and more so at the unmerited contumely which accompanied it, I resolutely refused compliance with an order so cruel and nefarious, and even proceeded so far as to set his whole power at defiance.

This, however, was as unavailing, as warring against the winds; for, in a moment, I was beset on all sides by the merciless ministers of his pleasure, who seemed determined to convince me that it was to no purpose to oppose a power so superior.

Perceiving, therefore, their intention, and that it would be impossible for me to maintain my ground against a force so combined, I snatched up a knife, which accidentally lay upon the table, and, making one desperate effort, I

plunged it deep into the breast of the unfeeling author of my wrongs.

“Villain! said I, receive the due reward of thy wickedness! It is the lover, it is the husband that strikes!”

I was preparing to repeat the blow, when I was prevented therefrom, by perceiving him fall senseless on the ground, destitute of speech, and weltering in his blood.

The confusion which this action was the immediate occasion of, afforded me an opportunity of making my escape, which I instantly effected with the utmost precipitation, whilst those, who were the witnesses of my revenge, were busily employed in assisting their wounded master.

As it was impossible to determine what might be the event of an act so desperate, I readily concluded that it would be dangerous for me to tarry in the neighbourhood, and therefore made  
all

all the haste I could to forsake a place so pregnant with misfortune.

The day was now considerably advanced; the evening approached, and the sky looked big with rain.

To increase my vexation, I was almost penniless, nor could I see a possibility of providing myself with a supply; situated as I was, and unable to face those upon whose friendship and assistance I most essentially relied.

The disagreeable reflections these circumstances gave birth to, almost deprived me of the power of action. I accused myself of cowardice, in having quitted my house, and was even more than once upon the point of turning back, and trusting to the consequence of a judicial enquiry.

My Euphemia too! the apprehension of what she might endure, materially aggravated my sufferings, already beyond my ability to bear; and tended

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not a little to confirm me in the resolution of returning.

This resolution, however, was rendered impracticable by the sudden interference of a heavy storm, which, increasing at a prodigious and unusual rate, presently drenched me from head to foot, and compelled me to seek for shelter without delay.

In a few minutes I came up to a farmhouse, into which I entered, and, after paying my respects to the honest farmer, whom I soon discovered to be one of my tenants, but who fortunately did not recollect me, I enquired if he could furnish me with a bed?

After some little hesitation, he answered in the affirmative, which information created me as much satisfaction as in my present circumstances I was capable of enjoying.

Three days and three nights I continued in this place, sequestered from society,

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society, and without partaking of any other amusement, than such as the anguish and bitterness of my own thoughts administered to me.

On the fourth, as I was sitting in a melancholy position, in the chamber allotted me, brooding over my misfortunes, and incapable of forming a plan for the regulation of my future proceedings, my ideas were of a sudden disturbed by the entrance of my kind entertainer.

He informed me, that the gentleman of whom he rented his farm, was absconded, on account of his having dangerously wounded a nobleman in the neighbourhood, to whom he had lost the whole of his estate at play.

Glad of the opportunity which promised to gratify the desire I had of learning the particulars of his Lordship's situation, I asked him if there was any thing fatal to be apprehended from the action he had related; and

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how people in general were disposed to judge of the assailant?

In answer to this, he replied, that Lord Saintly, though somewhat better, was still in so bad a way, that his recovery was doubtful; and that, in respect to the unfortunate author of his illness, as he was no longer in possession of the extensive fortune which he formerly enjoyed, the humanity of the world was such, that he ought not to expect to meet with many advocates.

After a variety of sensible and pertinent remarks on the pernicious and destructive tendency of gaming, and in which I heartily and sincerely joined him, he took his leave, and left me alone to meditate upon the information he had presented me with.

I was pleased to find (the contrary of which I had but too great reason to fear) that his Lordship had not fallen the immediate victim of my resentment,  
and



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and I even proceeded to hope, that no unlucky accident might arise to interrupt the progress of his cure: for, notwithstanding the little reason I had to wish him well, and although I had every just cause to detest him, I was nevertheless far from being desirous of his death; an event which would have filled me with the most poignant uneasiness, and which would considerably have added to the misfortunes that already sufficiently overwhelmed me.

Having amply made every satisfaction required of me, for the many civilities I had received, I cordially bade adieu to the worthy farmer and his family, and, placing my trust in Providence, I wandered forth with a determination of trying the friendship of those, who, in the hour of care and affliction, had never failed of finding relief and comfort from my liberality and advice.

But alas! how was the scene changed!

Those, who, in the days of wealth and prosperity, courted my smiles, and who seemed to live but in my presence, now avoided me as the store-house of infection: their obligations forgot, their gratitude unrecorded, and all their professions of honour and reciprocal friendship swallowed up in the unfathomable vortex of pride and interest.

Turn me where I would, my unhappy story, accompanied with every possible aggravation which falshood and uncharitable malice could devise, was founded in my ears. My expressions were misinterpreted; my actions misrepresented; my virtues suppressed; and my errors transformed into vices almost too black and too horrid for description.

Is it, therefore, to be wondered at, that every door was shut against me, and that  
every

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every tongue wantonly assailed me? To provoke censure, it was sufficient that I was known to be unfortunate; and he who is accused of poverty, must never expect to escape persecution!

I was now reduced to the *ultimatum* of human wretchedness! Hopeless, and penniless; I had no house to shelter my head in; no bed, whereon to repose my weary limbs; and scarce remaining the smallest remnant of cloaths to protect me from the inclemency of the season. Nothing less than the assistance of an Almighty Power, could have possibly supported me against the weight of such accumulated hardships!

Thus humbled to the very threshold of misery; month after month I wandered insensibly about, no guide but Providence, and no direction but chance.

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The many mortifications I endured in that time, it is impossible to enumerate.

Depending for a subsistence upon the precarious liberality of a *few*, my application subjected me to the reproach of *ALL*.

That power, however, which had hitherto been my great support and protection, determined at length to recompense me for the many trials and afflictions I had undergone, by restoring me once more to life, and by making me a partaker in the joys of friendship, and in the charms of society.

The completion of this task was happily reserved for Honorius. He needs not to be reminded of the situation in which he found me. I wish not to wound his sensibility, by recalling to his memory a picture so affecting. Suffice it therefore, to say,

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that "I was an hungered, and he gave me meat; I was thirsty, and he gave me drink; I was a stranger, and he took me in; naked, and he clothed me."



## C H A P. XII.

HAVING thus brought his history to a period, Raymond was once more proceeding to express his gratitude to Honorius for the favours he had received, when the latter interrupted him, by a remark which did the highest honour to his humanity, whilst, at the same time, it conveyed the most unquestionable proof of the reality of his friendship.

Perhaps, said Honorius (whilst a soft and inexpressible languor diffused itself over his countenance, and bespoke the exquisite delicacy of his feelings), perhaps, my friend may require a little rest after the fatigue of so long a narration? Brooding over its misfortunes, the mind becomes burthensome even to itself. The more severe the  
con-



### THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 133

conflict it endures, the more does it require the kindly interference of sleep, to compose the violence of its sufferings.

It was not, however, till after repeated invitations, that Raymond could be prevailed upon to accept the generous offer of his benefactor.

He was cautious of adding to the obligations he had already received: he felt the weight of those obligations; and he saw but too great reason to fear that he should never more have it in his power to make a suitable acknowledgment to the author of them.

Heaven! said Honorius, the instant Raymond had quitted us, how little do mankind consult their own happiness, in the use to which they generally apply the gifts of fortune!

Did they but reflect that charity like mercy, "*blesseth him that gives, and him that takes,*" how differently would they act!

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But I tell thee, Euphraſtus, continued he, we are all, even the beſt of us, by nature hypocrites. Vain, ſelfiſh and aſpiring, we have each of us a deſire of being thought virtuous, whiſt we neglect to put in practice the very means which would make us deſerving of a diſtinction ſo rare.

Thus ſimulation does undo us all!

\* \* \* \* \*

A paper, which negligently lay upon the ground, diverted Honorius's attention from the further proſecution of theſe thoughts; and, as it appeared to wear the livery of the Muſes, we made no hesitation to inform ourſelves more particularly reſpecting it.

It was evidently the compoſition of Raymond, and conſiſted of a number of ſtanzas, neither deſtitute of poetry nor pathos.

Ah

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Ah then! said Honorius, I no longer suspect the sincerity of my friend's conjugal affection.

He who breathes forth his passion in humble prose, may be doubted; but if he rhymes, he is infallibly caught.

It is, AN INVOCATION TO THE SUN, said I.

Read it, said Honorius.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

PARENT of health, whose genial ray,  
Calls rude creation into day;  
Majestic mount yon azure dome,  
And guide my wand'ring fair one home.

Or whilst in orient splendor bright,  
Thou roll'st thro' fields of purest light,

One

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One gentle beam in pity spare,  
To chase the clouds that hide my fair !

Where, my Euphemia, dost thou rove ?  
What envious clime conceals my love ?  
What power of hell, what fiend of night  
With-holds thy beauties from my sight ?

Forlorn without thee, all the day  
I sigh the tedious hours away ;  
The tedious hours I find depart,  
But not the pangs that rend my heart !

Oh ! could I hope to see thy face,  
E'en earth's remotest bounds I'd trace,  
Where savage wolves the soul affray,  
And hungry lions roar for prey.

Not Afric's burning plains I'd dread,  
Where death triumphant lifts his head ;  
Where tempests howl, and whirlwinds rise,  
And pointed lightnings cleave the skies.

Nor

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 137

Nor yet, to Greenland's coast confin'd,  
Should coward fear possess my mind ;  
Led by my love, intense I'd glow,  
Midst hills of everlasting snow.

Thus undismay'd, alike I'd meet  
Pale winter's cold, and summer's heat ;  
Nor heat, nor cold, nor grief, nor smart,  
Should tear thy image from my heart.

In vain to grace the blushing spring,  
The flow'rs their earliest produce bring ;  
For ah ! no spring to me has charms,  
Whilst thou art absent from my arms !

With thee, the balm of every care,  
Nor death, nor danger would I fear ;  
Blest in thy smiles, alone I prove  
The joys refin'd of peace and love.

Then come, whilst rich by nature drest,  
The year puts on her purple vest ;

Whilst



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Whilst yet the blossom bends the spray,  
And all creation hails the May.

Come, whilst new joys successive rise,  
And dance in pleasure's brilliant eyes ;  
Whilst rural sports the hours beguile,  
And grief forgets her cares, to smile.

For thee, each flow'ret leaves it's bed,  
The gaudy tulip rears it's head,  
The lilies blow, the roses bloom,  
And amaranthus breathes perfume.

For thee, health jocund in her train,  
The linnet swells her softest strain,  
Whilst, as she sings, th' attentive grove,  
Dissolves in harmony and love.

The fountain, near whose mossy cell,  
Content and peace delight to dwell ;  
For thee, a thousand currents rolls,  
For thee, a thousand hues unfolds.

Each



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 139

Each gentle charm of soft repose,  
Each pure delight that fancy knows,  
Each wanton breeze that waves the tree,  
Invites thee back to love and me.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XIII.

THE observations, which the verses just repeated gave birth to, furnished Honorius and myself with a very agreeable conversation until dinner-time.

The genuine strain of poetic enthusiasm, with which they abounded, was remarked by Honorius, as indicating a violence of affection, equally sincere and uncommon. Nor was the esteem which he had formerly conceived for Raymond any ways diminished by so amiable a discovery.

In truth, Honorius carried his notions of love and friendship to a pitch of refinement, that may not improperly be termed idle and romantic.

The disappointment he had continued to meet with in these pursuits, it might have been presumed, would, in  
some

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some measure, have corrected him of his Quixotism, and have reconciled him to the customs and manners of the world.

But Honorius was not so easily to be won.

The more he saw of mankind, the more he learnt to despise them.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our short meal being finished, and the cloth removed, we remained some time silent, each busily employed in the pleasures of speculation.

Accidentally directing my eyes upwards, to my infinite astonishment, I perceived Honorius bathed in tears!

What a fortunate incident to a sympathetic mind!

In his right hand he held a small picture, upon which he gazed with an ardour inexpressible.

It

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It was the perfect representation of female beauty, and was suspended from his neck by a blue ribbon.

One solitary drop, of more consequence to the heart of sensibility, than the brightest pearl to be found in the diadem of royalty ; one solitary drop, fell, unregarded by him, on the unconscious object of his contemplation.

He instantly perceived it.

Blushing at the recollection of his own weakness, he endeavoured to wipe it away.

The attempt, however, was vain.

For, before he had time to execute that intention, it was accompanied by its fellow.

Honorius blushed more than ever ; and, with the precious testimony of his feelings, yet warm upon it, he hastened to replace the picture in the repository of his bosom.

There

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There was an inconceivable softness and delicacy discoverable in the countenance of Honorius upon this occasion.

The most glowing and animated labours of the pen, and of the pencil, would be alike insufficient to do justice to the description.

It was something more than human.

The selfish and illiberal may, perhaps, impute the perplexity under which he suffered, to a cause unworthy of him. But HE, whose unbounded wisdom penetrates into the secret thoughts of his creatures; HE, who tries the heart and the reins, shall acquit him in the day of his wrath.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alas! my Euphrastus, said Honorius, what a strange, what an incomprehensible being is man! Without the  
least



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least government over his appetites and desires, he is hurried away by every storm and start of passion, to the commission of a thousand errors. Reason and religion, in vain, exert their voices to bring him back to the paths of wisdom. Their labours are ineffectual; their remonstrances are lost; and all their eloquence is offered as an idle sacrifice to the winds.

“ You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops, and to make a noise  
When they are fretted with the gusts of Heav’n.”

Even I, my friend, I, who have cautiously endeavoured to avoid the weaknesses into which I see others fall; I, whose experience in life has been ample and extensive; even I, have not escaped the general infection.

If thou hast eyes, Euphrastus, if  
thou hast a heart capable of the softer  
emotions of tenderness and pity; if  
thou



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thou hast affections, passions, and art  
not above sympathizing with thy friend,  
behold this picture !

It is the work of a master :

“ ——— yet how far

The substance of my praise might wrong this  
shadow

In underprizing it ; so far this shadow  
Doth limp behind the substance.”

Wilt thou not despise me, continued  
he, should I confess unto thee the  
hidden weakness of my soul ? Should  
I acknowledge that I am not insensibly  
blind to the soft and irresistible magic of  
beauty ? Yet true it is. This bosom,  
my friend, is devoured by a hopeless  
passion, a passion which destroys the  
very faculties of reason ; yet, cannot  
all the resolution I am master of, con-  
quer, or in the least reduce it.

This picture, my Euphrastus, will  
enable thee to judge whether or not I

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ought

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ought to be blamed. It is not an unfaithful copy of her I love, though destitute of ten thousand nameless and attractive graces, which may only be found in the beautiful original, and which art can never reach.

Here Honorius ceased, allowing me to comment, as I pleased, upon what he had related.

The intimacy which happily subsisted betwixt us, and the familiarity with which he addressed me, upon so interesting and delicate a subject, gave me an opportunity, and that, without violating the laws of propriety, of informing myself more particularly of the origin and progress of a passion, which promised to afford no inconsiderable share of entertainment in the recital.

Honorius did not attempt to discourage my curiosity. On the contrary, the instant he was acquainted with my desire, he prepared to gratify it.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIV.

WHAT idea, said Honorius, wilt thou entertain of my love, Euphrastus, when thou art informed, that I am a stranger to the very name of her who inspired it; that I am totally unacquainted with her rank, fortune, family and connections; that I am ignorant of the place of her residence; and incapable of forming a conjecture likely to assist me in discovering any of those particulars?

That strange and unaccountable fatality, which has invariably accompanied every event of my life, seems not to have neglected me on the present occasion. Like the hand of persecution, it is only raised to confound, and only eager to destroy.

H 2

Dif.

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Disatisfied with the world and its customs, and disgusted with that cloud of hypocrisy, vice and vanity, which obscure the appearance of candour, virtue and refinement, I need not instruct thee, Euphrastus, what induced me to seek for retirement.

Suffice it, that my motive was good, nor need I blush at the remembrance of it.

Soon after my arrival here, I insensibly contracted an acquaintance with the widow Stanley. She was my next-door neighbour. The frequent opportunities I had of visiting her, and of gaining an insight thereby into her many amiable qualities, soon ripened the friendship I had conceived for her, into the most perfect esteem and veneration.

She was to me as a mother, and by her advice did I regulate all my actions, whether of a public or domestic nature,

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 149

ture, and I even submitted my most favourite studies and pursuits to a conformity with her will.

The deference and respect which I never failed of paying to her judgment and determinations, induced her to consider me in a light far superior to that of a common acquaintance: as it was her unwearied study to oblige me, so was she never more sincerely delighted than when engaged in a manner that promised to administer to my happiness or satisfaction.

It was impossible I could remain ignorant of her disposition in my favour. I saw with what generous eagerness she embraced every opportunity of rendering me services the most essential; nor should I avoid despising myself, could I be wanting to entertain a grateful memory of her unexampled kindness and partiality.



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Visiting her one day, according to my usual custom, she informed me that she had let out an apartment in her house to a lady, whose person she described as a composition of every thing divine and amiable.

Notwithstanding the commendations which were so amply lavished, by the good gentlewoman, on her fair tenant, I had not the least curiosity or desire to see her; but, contenting myself with the assurances I had already received, I was preparing to take my leave, when all my indifference was in a moment changed, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of her whose perfections had been the subject of our conversation.

Bursting upon my ravished senses, like the effulgence of the morn, she, in an instant, realised to my fancy all that poets and divines had taught of beauty and of Paradise.

Her



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Her figure was the most delicate that imagination could form, beautifully modelled and exactly proportioned : her countenance, in spite of an air of melancholy visible upon it, displayed an assemblage of the powers of love, grandeur and majesty : and her eyes, but hold ! description here must fail. Let fancy supply its defect.

Agitated beyond expression, and suffering under emotions which, till that moment, my bosom was unacquainted with, I gazed insensibly upon her ; I sighed involuntarily ; I trembled without knowing why ; my senses were confused ; and I grew giddy with surprise, fear and delight.

Mrs. Stanley, who perceived the state of my heart, and who rejoiced in the hopes of a passion which promised to reconcile me to the world, relieved me from the awkwardness of my situation, by some ingenious remark, which, cal-

ling off my attention for a moment from the beautiful vision which dwelt upon my sight, gave me an opportunity of rallying my scattered senses, and of resuming thereby that ease of deportment, which her entrance had so much interrupted.

As it was to some trifling domestic matters alone we were obliged for the visit we had received, so, as nothing arose to detain her, in a few minutes she retired again to her apartment, with a grace which gave her additional charms, and left me fixed and suspended with wonder, transport and admiration.

“ Confess now, said Mrs. Stanley, the instant we were alone, that you are no longer indifferent to the attractions of beauty. Is she not an amiable creature ?”

“ She is an angel” ! said I.

“ But

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“ But who is she ? what is she ? from whence does she come ? and what name is she distinguished by ? ”

“ These are questions, replied Mrs. Stanley, which it is impossible for me to answer, as my knowledge of her is nearly as confined as yours. ”

She then proceeded to inform me, that the evening before, as she was sitting alone, the lady, of whom we were speaking, unattended by any one, came to her and requested to know if she could indulge her with an apartment in her house, professing, at the same time, an almost total indifference in respect either to terms or situation.

As her countenance carried with it those exterior evidences which could not fail, at the first view, of prepossessing the beholder in her favour, the good widow, with a beneficence and candour which reflected upon her the highest honour, made no hesitation to

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receive her ; but desired her to consider the house, and every thing it contained, as her own.

This was the full amount of all I could learn, in answer to my enquiries ; and with this very unsatisfactory intelligence, I returned home to brood in silence over my sufferings, and to marvel at the extraordinary effects of a passion which I was wont to despise.

The succeeding morning, I paid my respects to Mrs. Stanley much earlier than usual.

She read my impatience, and smiled at so sudden a revolution in my sentiments.

As I had not breakfasted, she invited me to stay and take a cup of tea with her ; and, further to induce me, she assured me of the company of her fair lodger, whom she had already disposed in my favour, so far as to insure

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 155

sure me a reception equal to my wishes.

I am ignorant of the art by which Mrs. Stanley produced so happy an effect; but certain it is, I was received by the lovely idol of my vows, in a manner every way flattering, and with the familiarity and unreservedness of an old acquaintance.

From this time forward, I was regular in my attendance upon her. Unawed by affectation, and unrestrained by idle ceremony, I addressed her with a plainness and sincerity, and with a constancy and perseverance which at least entitled me to her compassion; whilst every day increased the violence of my desires, and added to my love.

Notwithstanding the charms and graces of her person, which became every hour more and more familiar to me, I soon found that they were

H 6

greatly



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greatly and infinitely surpassed by those of her mind.

Possessed of a strength of thought, and a solidity of judgment, unusual in her sex, she joined thereto a delicacy of action and deportment, which served as the unquestionable assurance of the purest will, the tenderest heart, and the most engaging manners.

It was not without pain I perceived, after a very short acquaintance with her, that some secret uneasiness preyed upon her quiet.

The sudden suspension of thought and memory; the frequent and involuntary sigh, and the tear wandering insensibly down her cheek, all proclaimed a truth which I should have been glad to have been mistaken in.

And yet, so cautious was I of increasing her unhappiness, that I avoided every enquiry which I apprehended might be attended with so disagreeable  
a con-



a consequence; and thereby lost the opportunity of informing myself of certain points which I was exceedingly desirous of being satisfied of; as well as of offering her that assistance which, from my fortune and friendship, she had equally a claim to.

Four months did I continue thus happily and uninterruptedly to enjoy the conversation and good opinion of the charming Sophia (for such was the name by which she chose to distinguish herself), when all my hopes and expectations were suddenly terminated by an adventure which plunged me into the deepest sorrow.

Sophia was disappeared!

Mrs. Stanley, not doubting but that she was in her apartment, had, as usual, sent to ask her to breakfast; but what tongue can paint the affliction of the good lady, when she was informed that her favourite was no where to be found;  
that

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that the bed-clothes were smooth as on the preceding day ; and that every circumstance tended to confirm us in the belief that her elopement was premeditated !

Upon a second and stricter examination, a small parcel was discovered, in which were inclosed a sum of money, fully sufficient to discharge every obligation she had received, this picture, and a letter directed to Mrs. Stanley.

The letter was worded as follows :

“ Madam,

“ Should I quit your presence and  
“ protection, without attempting to  
“ apologize for the necessity of such a  
“ measure, you would justly have rea-  
“ son to accuse me of ingratitude ; nei-  
“ ther would the consciousness of the  
“ many favours and civilities I have  
“ received at your hands, fail doubly  
“ to

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“ to imbitter the recollection of a re-  
“ missness so inexcusable.

“ My first application to you was in  
“ the character of a friendless and for-  
“ lorn creature ; abandoned by the  
“ world, and cut off from every ex-  
“ pectation of hope and happiness.  
“ Providence has, however, at last,  
“ raised up in my mind the memory  
“ of one, in whose friendship I can-  
“ not doubt of soon forgetting the se-  
“ verity of my misfortunes ; and, well  
“ knowing how painful a task it is to  
“ bid an eternal adieu to those whom  
“ we have been taught to esteem, I  
“ rather preferred the method I have  
“ taken, in hopes thereby of lessening  
“ those pangs the heart must naturally  
“ expect to feel.

“ Inclosed you will find a trifle,  
“ which I beg your acceptance of, as  
“ some acknowledgment for the ex-  
“ pence you have been at on my ac-  
“ count.

I

“ My

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"My picture I wish to be presented  
"to Honorius. It will serve to remind  
"him of one who has the highest opi-  
"nion of his virtues..

"That you may both meet with  
"every comfort and with every blessing,  
"both here and hereafter, is the sincere  
"and hearty prayer of

"SOPHIA."

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

IN this manner, concluded Honorius, was I unexpectedly deprived of my mistress. I left without any other consolation than such as her picture may afford me, my passion, in spite of me, every day increases, nor is it in the power of time or absence to root it out, or in the least diminish it.

Tell me then, Euphrastus, how wouldst thou advise me to act? Art thou in possession of a secret that may at once effectually eradicate the finest feelings of the heart? Or can'st thou instruct me how I may pluck from my mind the memory of her perfections?

\* \* \* \* \*

I was

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I was just preparing to reply, when I was diverted therefrom by the entrance of Raymond.

He had been, for some hours, in the full and uninterrupted enjoyment of a sound sleep; the good effects of which were visible both in his countenance and behaviour.

Honorius had still in his hand the picture of her who was the sovereign of his affections.

By an accident, it fell to the ground.

Raymond instantly caught it up, and was proceeding to return it to Honorius, when casually casting his eye obliquely upon it, he stood motionless, and petrified with wonder and admiration.

'Twas the counterfeit of Euphemia!

Gracious Heaven! said Raymond, looking wildly around him, Where is she? where is she?

Ah!



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Ah! my friend, my Honorius, continued he, complete the generous work your goodness has begun, and conduct me where my eyes may once more be blessed with her presence. Oh my Euphemia! my wife! my wife!

Your wife! replied Honorius, amazed; is it possible! Almighty Father! By what inexplicable ways are the affairs of thy creatures regulated!

Ah! it is not to be wondered at, that she who had charms to captivate the heart of my friend, should also make me her captive! The conclusion is natural.

Honorius then proceeded to furnish Raymond, whose impatience will not easily admit of description, with every particular relative to his acquaintance with Euphemia.

He disguised nothing from him, not even his attachment to her, nor the method by which he became possessed of her.

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her picture; but candidly and ingenuously presented him with the relation of every event that had come to his knowledge, from his first interview with her to her final disappearance.

Alas! then, said Raymond, I am as remote as ever from seeing an end to my miseries! Will neither time nor patience soften the rigour of my fate! Blessed in the possession of my Euphemia, I had bade defiance to calamity, and mocked at the frown of adversity; but I submit myself, in all things, O Father, to the dispensations of thy Providence!

\* \* \* \* \*

To what variety of wretchedness, said Honorius, may human nature be reduced! Neglected by friends, insulted by enemies, forsaken by the world, and deprived of all those comforts and conveniencies

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 165

niencies which alone serve to make existence tolerable. Death, in its most hideous form, is to be preferred to such evils.

And yet, "the oppressor's scorn; the proud man's contumely;" and all the senseless malice and inveterate zeal of professed enmity, are but trifling in comparison to the agonizing pangs which the heart endures when slighted by those we love and esteem.

Raymond will acknowledge the truth of this assertion.

Son of Sorrow! how do I pity thee!

What a mean and unfavourable idea must thou necessarily entertain of thy fellow-creatures, acquainted as thou art with their numberless vices and imperfections!

Thy Euphemia too! She, the wife of thy bosom, even she has left thee!

Un-

Unwillingly, however, has she left thee.

But it shall be my task to find her and to restore her to thee.

To-morrow will I set about the execution of so pleasing a work. He whose wisdom is unbounded; and whose mercy and loving kindness reacheth from one end of the earth even to the other, shall afford me his guidance and protection.

Thou, Euphrastus, shalt be my companion. Raymond too; he is peculiarly interested in the event of our enquiry, nor will he, I trust, refuse to partake with us in the fatigue of a journey which may ultimately tend to the restoration of his own happiness.

\* \* \* \* \*

The remainder of the day was employed in making some trifling preparations for our intended expedition.

Ho-

**THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 167**

Honorius was, perhaps, the most precipitate of the whole race of projectors. No sooner had he formed his plan, than he was eager to reduce it to practice. And yet the execution was seldom endangered by inadvertency.

And in what manner are we to travel?  
said I.

In the most primitive, replied Honorius.

Then God help modern improvements! said I.

**CHAP.**



## C H A P. XVI.

IT was a pleasant morning in the month of May.

Not Don Quixote, Amadis de Gaul, the redoubtable 'Squire Twiss, the adventurous and amorous Mr. Joseph Banks, nor the whole collective tribe of modern monster-mongers, ever commenced a journey with greater or with better spirits than what distinguished us on the present occasion.

Honorius insensibly forgot his former disappointments :

Raymond gave a truce to the memory of his misfortunes ;

And, as for myself, my thoughts were,—but let *Seneca* speak for them,

‘ Operosæ nihil agunt,’

The most unquestionable evidence of a mind at ease.

We



We had now travelled several miles, and had reached the extremities of Wiltshire, bordering upon Berkshire, before any one of us expressed the least desire of partaking of some refreshment.

One of those houses of entertainment, with which the western road abounds, and which we were obliged to pass, reminded us, however, of the necessity we were under of paying some attention to the pressing demands of our nature.

We accordingly entered, and, without waiting for any invitation, uncere-  
moniously seated ourselves.

Having partook of a hearty breakfast, each after his own way, I thought it time to enquire of Honorius, to what part of the world it was his intention to conduct us?

To the centre of Fashion and Folly, replied Honorius; to the metropolis of the British empire, Euphrastus.

It is an overgrown monster: said I.

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It

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It is, however, an epitome of the universe, rejoined Honorius; and therefore, the most likely place to afford us what we are in search of.

\* \* \* \* \*

A few miles to the east of Hungerford, we came up to a decrepid object, who, to all appearance, was sinking into his grave.

“Pale misery had worn him to the bones.”

He endeavoured to support his tottering frame some little time longer, by the aid of two miserable and unpaired crutches.

His exertions, however, were vain ;

For just as we approached him, Nature, enfeebled and exhausted, yielded him a sacrifice to the earth he before trod upon.

What a moment for calling forth the tender offices of compassion !

It

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It was now that Honorius lamented the preference he had given to so very *primitive* a method of traveling.

Had I but a chaise ! said he.

But it was no time to debate :

'The object before us demanded our immediate attention.

Raising him up, therefore, from the uneasy posture in which he was lying, we endeavoured to call into action the small remains of life, which was then apparently on the eve of quitting him for ever.

A drop of water, for the love of Heaven ! said the mendicant, faintly lifting up his eyes.

We had passed a brook about half a mile, at the bottom of the hill.

Raymond immediately undertook to fetch him some from thence ; whilst I, at the request of Honorius, proceeded onwards to a house about the same distance, for the purpose of providing

a carriage to conduct him, where he might meet the necessary attendance his situation required.

The instant we were departed, each on his respective embassy, he who had thus interested our compassion, began to manifest some very visible marks of a wonderful alteration. He no longer seemed as sinking beneath the hand of misery, but, on the contrary, he assumed an appearance which spoke him possessed of youth, strength, and correspondent spirits.

Honorius was going to congratulate him on so sudden a change, when, drawing a pistol, and presenting it to his breast, he demanded his money.

What a world is this! said Honorius.

The robber had, however, just then neither leisure nor inclination to moralize; but, having pocketed his booty, he threw aside his crutches, and made the

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the best of his way down a by-road, the better to avoid the consequence of a pursuit.

He needed not, however, to have been under any apprehension of this sort.

Honorius, in the article of revenge, differed materially from the rest of his fellow creatures. He would not, for the gratification of so mean a passion, have deviated one inch, either to the right hand or to the left.

We must all endeavour to live, said Honorius.

What an encouragement for idleness!——

It was not long before *we* returned. Raymond with some water, which, however, he was under the necessity of bringing in the crown of his hat; and I with a post-chaise.

Honorius was sitting on the bank, with his head somewhat declined, and his hands pensively folded together:



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He was lost in thought.

Without seeming to mind him, we sat ourselves down on each side of him.

This circumstance instantly recalled his attention : and, darting a look at us, sufficient of itself to inform us that something extraordinary had happened, he left us to wander a while, as before, in the fields of conjecture.

It was an unprofitable pursuit.

The more we considered it, the more difficult was the solution.

Here is the water, and here is the chaise, said I ; but where is the man ?

Honorius related to us all that had happened.

It is but an ungrateful return for our humanity : said I.

And yet, said Honorius, it is thus the world is taught wisdom.

It



THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 175

It may, however, furnish us with a useful lesson in future.

\* \* \* \* \*

As I had succeeded in procuring a chaise, Honorius proposed that it should convey us to Newbury, which lay at a very inconsiderable distance from the scene of our late adventure.

A proposal of this sort could not well come more seasonably, as we had already walked upwards of twenty miles, which to those (if we except Raymond) unused to so laborious a method of traveling, was no trifling performance.

We shall now, in all probability, said Honorius, as we were journeying along, soon arrive at the metropolis. There we may expect to meet with vice and deceit in every corner, and in every form.

But I am determined to be cautious.

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No man shall partake of my friendship, till I am first satisfied that he is worthy of my confidence.

I will studiously examine the countenance of every one with whom I have any dealings. Nature, for infinitely wise purposes, has ordained that the face should serve as an index to the heart.—

And yet it is an index upon which we cannot always rely : said I. Remember the wretch, who, but a few minutes ago supplicated our compassion.

Honorius was dumb.

\* \* \* \* \*

We were now at the *Spina* of the Romans.

It called to our memory the times of old—the times of slavery, and the times of oppression.

Honorius entertained us with a discourse on population and civilization :

on

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 177

on the revival of arts, and the institution of commerce.

Every turn of the wheels, furnished us with some new remark, and with some new matter for conversation; and, thus employed, we arrived at Newbury; which necessarily interrupted the further prosecution of observations so agreeable.

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C H A P. XVII.

HAVING dined, and the day being visibly upon the decline, Honorius gave us to understand, that it was his wish we should continue all night where we then were.

A request so reasonable, and so exactly conformable in every respect to our own will, neither Raymond nor I had the least inclination to oppose. We were already sufficiently fatigued, and could therefore ill brook the idea of increasing it.

It was a delightful evening.

The air was serene, the sky was unclouded, and the sun was sinking peaceably down the west of Heaven, which was crimsoned with beauties inexpressible.

Invited

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Invited by the animated graces, and the divine profusion of luxuriant images with which the glowing prospect on all sides abounded, we insensibly forgot the toil of travel.

We will endeavour to amuse ourselves awhile, said Honorius, by taking a survey of the town. It may, perhaps, prove not altogether unworthy of our attention.

Without waiting for our reply, he hastily quitted us; leaving us to follow him at our leisure.

Having seen and examined every thing we thought worth our observation, Raymond and I were preparing to return to the inn, when our eyes were of a sudden attracted by the appearance of Honorius.

He was accompanied by a female, whose figure and garb were equally objects of admiration, and which presented

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sented to us a spectacle truly wonderful and singular.

She was full six feet in height, and otherwise proportionably large.

Her dress consisted of a soldier's coat, here and there diversified by a patch of an opposite colour : her head was shaded by a monstrous beaver, which was tied under her chin with a remnant of woollen list : and her toes peeped out from a pair of shoes, which, in spite of an unconsanguineous appearance, seemed to have existed the friendly associates of many winters.

In respect to the female part of her attire, it was confined to a short petticoat, an apron, and a cap ; each of which served as an unquestionable evidence of wretchedness, poverty and distress.

Nor was the ferocity of her figure any ways diminished, by a number of seams and bruises which were plentifully dispersed



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disperfed about her countenance, and which added a manlinefs to her features, fufficient to give the lie to her fex.

In her hand ſhe bore a ſhovel, which ſhe thrêw acrofs her ſhoulder, and in that manner attended Honorius, who ſeemed not a little proud of his new acquaintance, if we might be allowed to judge by the ſatisfaction which was painted in his countenance, and which viſibly appeared in all his actions and behaviour.

Follow me, ſaid Honorius, the moment he came up to us.

Thou knoweſt, Euphraſtus, continued he, addreſſing himſelf to me; thou knoweſt that I have long been deſirous of penetrating indifcriminately into the diſpoſitions and characters of my fellow creatures, from the prince to the peafant.

Like the bee, I would wiſh to glean profit even from the very reſufe of  
the ]

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the garden; and, as the most valuable gems are generally concealed under the rudest surface, so a singularity of appearance has principally directed me in my study of mankind.

Nor have my endeavours gone altogether without their reward.

I have not unfrequently met with virtue in the shape of distress, and I have enjoyed the highest of all rational pleasures—that of rescuing merit from the shade of obscurity.

What thinkest thou then of *her* whom Fortune has just now so unexpectedly thrown in my way?

Does not her whole figure promise something extraordinary?

I need not inform thee that it is my intention to enquire into the most remarkable incidents of her life.

It was for that purpose I brought her hither.

Probably

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 183.

Probably it may furnish something not unworthy our attention.

However, that can only be determined by the event.

\* \* \* \* \*

Being now returned to the inn, we had a better opportunity of examining into the peculiarities of our new acquaintance.

Honorius was not mistaken in the judgment he had formed of her.

She was, indeed, a composition of the strange and wonderful.

Her figure, her manner, her dress, and her deportment equally contributed to raise our expectation and curiosity; and filled us with impatience for the accomplishment of the promise Honorius had given us.

As soon, therefore, as she had regaled herself by partaking of a full meal, Honorius made known unto

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unto her his desire of learning the particulars of her life and history.

It must be entertaining, said Honorius, and will serve to wear away the evening.

C H A P. XVIII.

IT is not in my power, Sir, said she, to give you an account of my parents; as the first knowledge I have of myself, is, of my being pent up in a parish work-house, subject to the cruelty and ill-usage of a barbarous mistress, and not even suffered to enjoy the scanty morsel allowed me, without murmuring and reproach.

At the age of fourteen, a farmer in the neighbourhood, who wanted a strong girl to assist in his family, took me as an apprentice, and by that means eased the parish of the expence of further providing for me.

My master was a very worthy kind of a man, only somewhat apt to drink too much, at which times he used to beat me unmercifully, and for the most trifling

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trifling offence. However, I must do him the justice to acknowledge, that I neither wanted for a good meal, nor a good bed to lie upon, the whole three years I remained with him.

My employment consisted in cleaning the house, scouring the pails, milking the cows, churning the butter, feeding the hogs and looking after the horses, exclusive of doing the drudgery of the family; such as, washing and mending for seven children, besides my master and mistress; so that I was seldom idle: but, as I said before, I had plenty of good meat and drink, and so what signifies a little labour?

About three years after I was thus situated, as I was one day tending some sheep of my master's, a favourite dog, belonging to a justice of the peace, who lived at a little distance, seized upon a lamb under my care. I instantly flew to its relief, when the savage animal,



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mal, making a sudden spring at me, threw me to the ground, and would, in all probability have torn me to pieces, had I not recollected that I had a knife in my pocket, with which I stabbed him in the side, after he had given me several wounds, the marks of which you may yet perceive in my face and neck.

The loss of blood which I sustained on the occasion, was so great, that I was unable to rise.

However, about two hours afterwards, my master's eldest son, who was sent to see what was become of me, found me covered with blood, and almost senseless, by the side of the dog, who was dead and cold.

By the assistance he afforded me, I was enabled to get home, and, in a very little time, was so far recovered, as to be capable of resuming my usual employment.

This,

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This, however, did not continue long;

For, a few days after this, I was taken up by a warrant, and committed to prison for the murder of the justice's dog.

My master offered to bail me, and I really believe would have done it, if the justices had not refused him; however, he managed matters so with them, that although people in general said I should be hanged, yet he got me off for a severe flogging and a twelvemonth's imprisonment.

The former part of my sentence, I did not much like; but as for confinement, I valued it as nothing; for I never lived better in my days, being sent to the county gaol, where I had victuals and drink as much as I wanted, and did no work.

Here it was my lot to form an acquaintance with him who was afterwards my husband.

Poor

Poor William ! he was a loving soul and a good soul, and little deserving of the many hardships he endured. He had been committed upon a charge of having stolen an ale-house pot : however, he proved his innocence to the satisfaction of the whole court ; notwithstanding which, as he was unable to give a proper account of himself, the justices (God forgive them !) said he was a vagrant, by which I suppose they mean something very bad, and so sent him for a soldier.

Before he set out, he took his leave of me with tears in his eyes, promising, at the same time, that, if ever he lived to return to England, he would, if possible, find me out, and make me his lawful wife.

The next day he received orders to join the regiment, soon after which I heard that he was gone for America.

Well ! we must all endeavour to make ourselves as contented as we can. The worse

worse now, the better another time. For my part, I continued to keep up my spirits upon all occasions, by which means I passed away the term of my imprisonment much more agreeably than will readily be imagined.

As soon as I had got my enlargement, I applied to my old master, hoping that he would have taken me again; but, after the blemish my character had received, I found it would be in vain for me to expect a service from those who were in the least acquainted with my story.

My master, however, behaved to me very kindly in other respects; for he went about himself amongst the neighbours, who had formerly known me, and collected from them a sum of money, amounting in the whole to upwards of thirty shillings, which he presented me with, together with a written paper,

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paper, wherein he acknowledged me to have served him truly and honestly.

With part of this money, I purchased a suit of man's cloaths, which, however indifferent, served my purpose, as they fitted me to a hair; and, calling to mind my poor William, I was determined to go in search of him.

It was not long before I learnt, greatly to my satisfaction, that a party of recruits were arrived at a neighbouring town on their way to Portsmouth, from which place they were to embark for America.

I immediately made the best of my way to the spot to which I was directed; and, having found out the principal officer, I made him an offer of my service, which he readily accepted of; and the same day I was enrolled as a volunteer in his majesty's employ, and, for the

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the first time, took upon me the duty of a soldier.

People may say what they please of the hardship of a soldier's life ; but for my part, I must confess, that I was never happier.

I had plenty of meat, plenty of drink, good cloaths, a clean bed, and money in my pocket ; and what could I desire more ?

And then, as to work, why, I did more in the space of one month whilst I was with my old master the farmer, than I had any occasion to do the whole five years I was in the army.

Immediately upon our arrival at Portsmouth, we set sail, and, in a few hours, got clear of the channel, which gave us all fresh spirits.

As I had never before been at sea, I was at first exceedingly sick ; however, as I was not the only one, I did not much mind it.

Having



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Having learnt my exercise, I gained every day upon the esteem of my superiors ; especially the officer who enlisted me, who was pleased to say many handsome things concerning me ; and I verily believe, had I been able to read and write, he would have promoted me to the rank of a corporal.

But every one was not born to be a great scholar ; and so I made myself as easy as I could.

We had a pleasant and a speedy voyage of it ; and, in about five weeks from the time of our leaving England, we landed at Hallifax ; from whence, after staying some days to refresh ourselves, we were ordered to Louisbourg, to strengthen the forces under General Amherst.

Having taken and demolished Louisbourg, where I received a shot through the arm with a musquet ball, which confined me for several weeks, I made

every enquiry after William, and at last was informed, that he was upon the same service, and a very near neighbour to me.

With some difficulty I found him out.

He was in the camp, and alone, and little thought, poor soul! of meeting with me so far from home.

The noise I made in entering, occasioned him to lift up his eyes, which gave me the means of knowing, with the greater degree of certainty, that I was not mistaken in his person.

“ Ah, William !” said I, “ have I then found you ?”

William was all amazement !

“ Mercy on me !” said he ; “ is it you, Molly ?”

He was unable to say any more.

C H A P. XIX.

HAVING thus discovered myself, I met with the kindest reception from my dear William, who, I found, had abated nothing in his regard for me, and who still continued of the same mind as when he left me in England.

Soon after his landing, by his modest and obliging behaviour, and by his attention to his duty, he gained so much the favour and good-will of his officers, that they rewarded him with a halbert: for William was an excellent scholar, and could both read and write.

By his means, I was presently removed from the regiment I had till then been in, to that in which he was a serjeant; and now, seeing nothing that ought to prevent our union, we were contracted by the best and strongest of

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all ties,—those of inclination and affection.

I vowed eternal fidelity to him; and he swore to love me as long as he lived.

During the remainder of the war, I underwent variety of dangers, being in many bloody battles and in many hot skirmishes, in which I frequently saw my companions fall dead on every side of me, whilst I still had the good luck to escape without any other accident, saving only a few wounds, none of which gave me any great concern, as I enjoyed the satisfaction of being visited by my William, in whose presence I never failed of forgetting all my pains and all my sorrows.

But now it was, that I was to experience a change of fortune.

William was taken ill.

He was attended by the ablest physicians in the army, who did all they could

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could for him; but, in spite of all their care, he continued to grow worse and worse.

Finding there were no hopes of his recovery, he sent for me; and, having taken leave of me in a manner which drew tears from my eyes, he gave me his purse, in which were fifteen guineas and a half, besides some silver, all of which he had saved out of his pay.

He likewise gave me a gold watch and a ring, which he had taken from a French officer, whom he found dead, after the battle of Quebec; which I received more for the sake of him who presented them to me, than for any value I set upon them.

All these things I carefully kept by me a long while, and I verily believe I should still have had them, had it not been for an accident which I shall presently inform you of.

But, to return to William.

K 3

Soom



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Soon after I left him, he died; and, for my part, I thought that I should never have done mourning for him.

But time, they say, wears out every thing; so I made myself as contented as I could, and strove to forget him.

The war being now at an end, we were all ordered to return to England.

This was joyful news to many of my companions; but as to me, being a poor ignorant creature, I knew not what to do.

Since I had been in the army, I had so much been used to a life of idleness, that I could by no means think of settling myself to work as formerly; besides, I found it was so difficult to lay aside the dress to which I had so long been accustomed, that I began to conclude it best for me to continue as I was.

All my doubts on this head were, however, soon put an end to, by the following accident :

Upon



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Upon my arrival in London, having no relation nor acquaintance to go to, I had taken a lodging of a person who kept a chandler's shop, and from whom, at first, I received a great deal of civility, which made me think her a very worthy and deserving woman. But alack! we are all liable to be deceived!

I, one day, not properly considering what I was about, revealed to her the story of my life; and, amongst other things, mentioned poor William to her, shewing her, at the same time, the watch and the ring, which he had given me in his last moments.

God knows my heart! I thought no more than the babe unborn of what she was going to do; but the very next day she had me taken up by a warrant, and carried before a magistrate, upon a charge of having robbed her of the very articles, which, but for my folly, she had never seen.

The watch and ring being found in my possession, in manner as she had described them, and the circumstance of my disguise tending still further to confirm my guilt, the justice, without any delay, committed me for trial.

To be sure, Newgate is a most shocking place : however, the hardships I underwent there, did not make half the impression upon me, as did the baseness of the prosecutor, who, God forgive me ! I verily believe is a very wicked woman.

As I had still some money left, I was persuaded to employ an attorney, and the turnkey, who was remarkably kind to me, was so obliging as to recommend me to one, a particular friend of his, to whom I gave ten guineas, and for which sum he undertook to get me counsel, and to assist me in every thing necessary against the day of trial.

The

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The turnkey assured me, that his friend was a man of great abilities ; but, whatever might be his meaning for it, he never let me see him afterwards. Indeed the turnkey excused him by saying, that he must certainly have forgot it, as otherwise he would not have failed to have kept his word with me.

In a few days, the sessions began ; and, notwithstanding my innocence, the least I expected was, that I should be hanged. But matters turned out much better than I imagined they would :

For my landlady contradicted herself so often in her evidence, that the judge ordered her to be taken into custody, by which means I was once more restored to my liberty.

I now concluded, that, as circumstances favoured me so much, I should have my watch and ring returned me.

But herein I was again disappointed :

For, upon my enquiring about them, I was told, that they were detained for my fees, which, together with some other expences, amounted to much more than their value.

My good friend the turnkey, who gave me this information, further advised me to put up quietly with their loss, and to think myself well off in having escaped with my life.

I thanked him for his counsel; and, finding that it would be of no use to complain, I even did as he directed me.

Being thus left, without money or friends, my only hope was, that a war would break out again; in which case I might once more pay a visit to America.

In the mean while, I strove to pick up a livelihood by working in the gardens, mending the roads, or any other way

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way in which I might be thought useful.

Sometimes I did pretty well, at other times I was in danger of starving, going often, for days together, without tasting a morsel, and obliged at nights to lie in the streets and fields. However, I continued to keep up my spirits, and was thankful that things were no worse.

As work failed in one place, I endeavoured to get it in another; so that I have frequently rambled many miles about, without the least direction. But as every part of the world is the same to me, I always considered myself at home, and was therefore never any ways uneasy on that account.

I am just now returned from the west, in different parts of which I have, for some months back, found employment; and am from hence going recommended to a gentleman near Reading, who, I



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hope, will assist me, by taking and continuing me in his service.

And thus, Sir, concluded she, have I told you all that I know of myself from my earliest days to the present time.

I have, it is true, met with some difficulties and some hardships; but what of that! I am still alive and well. And I have, moreover, this satisfaction, that, although matters with me are not exactly as I could wish, yet they might have been much worse.

CHAP.



C H A P. XX.

HENCEFORWARD, said Honorius, let no man murmur at the state and condition in which it has pleased Providence to place him.

The merchant may entertain us with a recital of his losses, the man of excess may talk of his pains and his bodily infirmities, the voluptuary and the sensualist, of their frequent and continual disappointments, and the mortified enthusiast, of his penances and self-denials; but the sufferings of this one poor distressed individual, greatly and infinitely exceed them all.

Persecuted by the iron hand of Oppression, inclosed within the walls of a prison, deprived of her ALL, and surrounded by misfortunes of every kind, where is the heart that does not feel for her?

Shew

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Shew me him who is so much lost to sensibility, and I will learn to despise that man.

\* \* \* \* \*

The evening was now far spent, and Honorius, who was exceedingly regular in all his affairs, having partook of a light supper, began to make preparations for retiring.

It was not, however, his intention, that his new acquaintance should go without her reward. She had afforded what was to him the purest of all pleasures: she had awakened the finest feelings of his soul; and he thought he could not do too much in return for so exquisite a gratification.

He gave strict orders that she should be denied nothing, and that she should, moreover, at his cost, be provided with a bed.

I will

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I will consider further of her in the morning, said Honorius.

\* \* \* \* \*

How insecure and uncertain are all our enjoyments !

In the dead of the night, whilst all my senses were locked in a sound sleep, I was suddenly roused by a loud and uncommon noise.

Before I could possibly have time to form a conjecture of what might be the meaning of it, my chamber door was violently burst open by Raymond.

Surprise, terror, and apprehension were visibly depicted on his countenance.

The inn was on fire !

Then God protect the lame ! said I.

Without staying to encumber myself with dress, I burst through clouds of smoke,

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smoke, which on all sides furrounded me, and was in the yard in an instant!

Raymond was not a whit less nimble.

The flames had already destroyed part of the stair-case, and were making a rapid progress towards the apartment in which Honorius lay.

Ah! said I, then there is no time to be lost!

I was that moment flying to his rescue, when, to my infinite surprise and satisfaction, I perceived his amazonian acquaintance, Molly, hastening down the stairs with him on her shoulders.

It was a fortunate incident; for, had his preservation been delayed a single minute, he must inevitably have perished.

Molly, it seems, was awake when the first alarm was given.

Mindful of her benefactor, she made the strictest enquiry after him.

He

He was not to be found.

Having, however, with some difficulty, procured such information as served to direct her to the apartment in which he lay, she boldly, and without hesitation, forced a passage through the flames, thereby generously venturing her own life and safety for the preservation of his.

Honorius was unable to express his feelings on the occasion: he was truly sensible of the service he had received: he surveyed his kind preserver again and again from head to foot, with every mark of wonder and admiration; and—a tear started from his eye.

It was the tribute of gratitude.

\* \* \* \* \*

Is it not a melancholy consideration, said Honorius, that the social virtues should be more distinguishable in the lower classes



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classes of mankind, than in those who are surrounded and dignified by wealth and title ?

Yet so it is.

The rich and the great, in general, either contemn or totally disregard those obligations as bordering too much on weakness and folly. From hence originate that hardness of heart, and that confirmed insensibility to the distresses of our brethren, so prevalent in the fashionable world ; and hence arise pride, selfishness, and the thousand other mean and sordid vices which debase our nature and debauch our manners.

How widely different to this, appears the conduct of her to whose humanity and zeal I stand indebted for my present existence ! Unenlightened by education and unrefined by experience, to call forth her exertions, and to interest her compassion, it was simply sufficient that

I was



## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 211

I was in danger. Her feelings were in an instant alarmed for the safety of a fellow creature; and, guided by those feelings, it was her's to practise what the generality of mankind only discourse of.

\* \* \* \* \*

The fire had now exhausted its fury : as if, satisfied with the mischief it had already occasioned, it scarcely served to convey an idea of its former violence. It was therefore time for us to think of providing ourselves with apparel, as the rapidity of the flames had given us no opportunity of saving our own.

By the assistance of the neighbours, we were presently accommodated in the manner we most approved.

Nor was Honorius unmindful of his preserver.

He

He gave directions that she also should be furnished with strong and decent cloathing.

Do I not owe my very life to her ? said he. Then can I express my gratitude too much ? Impossible !

Notwithstanding the unpromising appearance which she displayed upon our first acquaintance with her, yet the alteration which her whole person underwent by means of her new habiliments, is truly inconceivable.

Her countenance, it is true, still bore the same scars and the same marks which distinguished her at first ; nor were her limbs less athletic. Nevertheless, as her features were no ways irregular, and as every part of her body was proportioned to each other, the figure which she presented us, when divested of her tatters, was neither deformed nor disagreeable.

In

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In truth, we every moment wondered still less at the passion of poor William, as she indubitably possessed these qualities which could not fail to make an impression upon a liberal mind,—candour and generosity. Her face bespoke the first; and her actions proclaimed the latter.

She had told us, that she was going recommended to a gentleman near Reading.

Honorius was desirous of enquiring more particularly of that circumstance.

His acquaintance in that part of the kingdom was extensive; and few were those to whom the name of Honorius was unknown.

Agreeable to his wish, he learnt that her recommendation was to a particular friend of his, one who had been to him even as a father.

She

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She shall continue with him, said Honorius, until we have completed the business upon which we are embarked. I will then take upon myself to be her protector, and I will provide for her an asylum, in which she shall forget her former sufferings.

The loss we had sustained, obliged us, much against our inclination to continue at Newbury, until we could have a remittance from home.

This necessarily detained us one day longer.

However, as there was no foreseeing accidents, we made a virtue of necessity, and bore our detention with all the philosophy we were masters of.

C H A P. XXI.

AS Honorius began now to be somewhat sensible of the many inconveniences resulting from the method of travelling he had so unaccountably preferred, and as our number was increased, he gave orders for a post-coach to convey us to Reading.

By the care and diligence of the drivers, in little more than two hours, we were, without meeting with any accident, welcomed to the King's Arms, by the very obsequious Mr. Flack.

The first business which engrossed the attention of Honorius was, that of visiting the gentleman to whom our fellow traveller was recommended.

He was at home.

After



After the usual salutations had passed, Honorius made him acquainted with the motive of his visit.

A distressed female, says he, comes recommended to you : be kind to her for the sake of your friend, as to *her* humanity he owes his very existence.

Honorius then related to him the most remarkable incidents of the life and history of his preserver, as he had learnt them from herself ; neither did he neglect to inform him of the very singular and essential service she had afforded him, in having so voluntarily and unexpectedly aided him at a time in which nothing but the greatest resolution and intrepidity could have possibly saved him from the danger which on every side surrounded him.

Can I do too much in acknowledgment of such a service ? said Honorius.

Let gratitude declare.



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From hence it is my intention to proceed onwards to London : how long I may be detained there, is at present uncertain ; however, treat her kindly until my return, and I will then place her in a situation in which she shall no longer remember the crosses and disappointments that have hitherto been the companions of her life.

\* \* \* \* \*

Honorius was now returned to the King's Arms.

He was accompanied by the gentleman to whom him his visit had been directed, and who readily accepted of an invitation of dining with us.

From his appearance we adjudged him to be turned of fifty.

Nor was our judgment any ways wrong.

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Having

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Having paid his compliments to us respectively, his eyes and his attention seemed to be entirely taken up with gazing on her who had been so much the object of Honorius's commendation.

Something, as he afterwards acknowledged, irresistibly and inexpressibly captivating, drew his regard, and compelled him, even against his will, to notice her.

It was the magic of nature ; it was that nameless something which unaccountably interests the heart and the affections, and which philosophy is unable to define.

And what name, said he, addressing himself to her, art thou distinguished by ?

Molly produced a small linen pouch, out of which she took a scrap of paper.

It was the certificate of her baptism from the parish register, and which she had received from the mistress of the work-

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work-house at the time of her apprenticeship.

Honorius read it :

“ Mary, the daughter of Samuel and Frances Freeland, baptised the 7th of July 1740.”

Gracious God ! exclaimed the stranger, with every symptom of unaffected surprise, Freeland ! The daughter of Samuel and Frances Freeland ! Tell me ! tell me ! in what work-house ?

At Basingstoke, in Hampshire : said Molly, interrupting him.

At Basingstoke ! Almighty Father ! at Basingstoke ! There was only this wanting to complete my happiness ! Yes ! continued he, I have at last found what I have so long and so diligently sought after, a SISTER ; a sister to whom until this hour I have been a stranger !

Nay, wonder not, said he, perceiving us somewhat surprised ; when we have dined, you shall be made acquainted

L 2

with

with the history of my life, you will then no longer doubt the reality of what I have been telling you, and you will then see that Providence has delayed this discovery, only that she might be the instrument of preservation to Honorius. In giving me a sister, Heaven has likewise given me in her, the saviour and preserver of my friend. Nothing less than a divine power could have been productive of an event so extraordinary !

It was curious to observe the effect this discovery had upon poor Molly. She knew not how to behave. She looked alternately at one and at the other of us, and seemed willing to discredit even the testimony of her senses.

Honorius, whose sincerity on the occasion was unquestionable, congratulated her upon so fortunate an incident. He exulted in the idea of having been,  
in

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 221

in some degree, the cause of a discovery so unlooked for. And he took upon himself the delightful office of giving her to the embrace of a brother.

It was an employment not unworthy of an angel !

## C H A P. XXII.

IT will be necessary, said Mr. Free-land, previous to any mention of myself, to give you some account of my parents.

My father was the younger brother of an ancient and respectable family, and was, very early in life, placed with a merchant in town of a fair character and extensive dealings, and who soon conceived a more than ordinary affection and regard for him.

At the expiration of his time, with the consent and approbation of her father, he married the only daughter of his master, and with her received a very considerable fortune.

About a year after their marriage, my mother brought me into the world; an event which afforded the most singular



gular satisfaction to every individual of the family.

My grandfather dying shortly after my birth, my father thereby not only gained a considerable addition to his fortune, but likewise stepped into the immediate enjoyment of the sole profits arising from a very ample and lucrative commerce.

From these circumstances, it might reasonably be expected, that the situation of my parents was such as placed them above the reach of misfortune; and that it was impossible for Fate to destroy, or even in the least to interrupt their happiness.

The first ten years of my life I passed in the full experience of every indulgence, which the partial fondness of two such tender guardians could bestow.

Under their immediate eye I was instructed in every branch of education, both useful and fashionable; nor did

the progress I made, in any wise tend to their dissatisfaction.

My father, in the mean time, greatly extended his dealings: the North, the East, the South, and the West made him large returns: his credit with all ranks was as fair as any man's, and his house was considered as one of the most respectable in Europe.

But alas! how soon, how very soon may the most flattering prospect be shaded, and every recollection of former prosperity be obliterated, or regarded only as a dream!

A banker, with whom my father had deposited sums to an incredible amount, unexpectedly stopped payment.

It is a general observation that one misfortune seldom comes alone; at least so it happened on the present occasion.

The next post brought advice of the loss of a valuable ship and cargo, which was immediately followed by a foreign  
bank-

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 225

bankruptcy of a house upon which my poor father had very considerable demands.

These successive calamities so involved him in misfortune, and so perplexed his circumstances, that he was unable to extricate himself from the difficulties that surrounded him, and even rendered him incapable of putting in execution those measures which were best calculated to benefit him.

His creditors, in the mean time, began to grow clamorous: they uncharitably imputed his misfortunes, which were unavoidable, to imprudence and extravagance, and affected to see a thousand blemishes in a conduct which was just before thought the most worthy of imitation.

My unhappy parent strove all he was able to satisfy those who were the most pressing in their demands, by paying them to the last shilling he could raise.

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But

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But all would not do, every day multiplied his difficulties, every hour added to his distresses, and a commission of bankruptcy which was issued against him, put the finishing stroke at once to all his hopes and to all his exertions.

His affairs, upon examination, turned out, however, much better than was in general expected they would. There was not only found a sufficiency to answer every demand, but likewise a considerable sum over and above.

This last circumstance administered some little comfort to both my parents, whose troubles were excessive, and such, as in the cure admitted not of ordinary remedies.

“ The world was all before them.”

And they had to begin it again.

It was, however, somewhat late for the experiment.

With the overplus of his effects, amounting to near the sum of two thousand

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 227

thousand pounds, my father once more determined to turn merchant.

It was a fatal determination, and such as involved him in the greatest of human miseries,—poverty, and shame.

I was now in my fourteenth year, the only pride and consolation of a fond mother. Notwithstanding such a series of domestic misfortunes, my education was in no one instance neglected.

The proficiency I had made in those scientific pursuits to which my time and talents had been directed, was such as highly flattered my friends whose partiality to me could not be exceeded.

But to return to my father.

In spite of the famous convention treaty, concluded the beginning of this year [1739] between the courts of Great Britain and Madrid, the insolence of the Spaniards was such as rendered a war with them inevitable.



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My father, whose property was now confined within a very narrow compass, joined with some others in fitting out a privateer, in hopes, by a capture of some of their vessels, to retrieve his circumstances, and thereby regain the ease and independence which he formerly was in possession of.

At first, the success that attended them was such as gave them every reason to be satisfied with their undertaking.

Within two months after the declaration of war, they made prize of several of the enemy's most valuable merchant ships, which, having converted into money, they were preparing to return with to England.

Full of these hopes, and directing their course homewards, they, one morning, were surprized by the appearance of a large vessel of force right a-head of them.

It



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It was a Spanish guarda costa.

It was to no purpose to think of flying as they were in the Mediterranean, and many leagues distant from any port of safety.

The only measure, therefore, from which they might hope to derive the least advantage, was centred in their courage.

They must either fight the enemy, however unequal in point of force, or agree to sacrifice, in a single moment, the sole fruits of what they had been so long toiling for.

The preference was given to the former.

Accordingly, every preparation being made for that purpose, they slackened sail, and resolutely lay to in expectation of the enemy's approach.

It was not long before they were within cannon shot of each other.

A fierce

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A fierce and bloody engagement immediately ensued, which lasted some time without any apparent advantage on either side.

This equality was, however, of no long continuance;

For the Spaniard, whose strength was much greater, and whose guns were much better served, soon began to manifest a superiority, which, unhappily, predicted the total overthrow and defeat of all the hopes and expectations which my poor father and his brother adventurers had so fondly fashioned.

Strewed from head to stern with human carcases, their masts cut away by the boards, and their amunition expended, what could they do?

They became the prize of the enemy.

It was, however, a prize dearly earned, as the condition of the conquerors

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querors was little better than that of the vanquished.

I will not attempt to describe the behaviour of my father upon the intelligence of his loss, which comprized his ALL.

As the war had been the means of greatly advancing the price of insurance, he had neglected to secure himself that way, and thereby rendered his misfortune the more irretrievable.

His situation, therefore, was now infinitely worse than ever.

Without money and without friends, he had to encounter an host of difficulties, which seemed determined to crush him, in spite of every effort he was master of.

To increase his troubles, my mother was again pregnant.

It was now near fifteen years since my birth; in all which time she had never once been with child; a circumstance

### 332 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

stance, therefore, so extraordinary, and every way so unexpected, happening at so critical a juncture, was far from affording them that satisfaction, which at any other period it could not fail of bestowing.

However, humbly submitting themselves to the Almighty Disposer of all things, they reposed their confidence and their hopes in Him from whom only they looked for protection, and who alone was able to support them in the hour of affliction, and in the day of tribulation.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIII.

THE condition to which my parents were thus unhappily reduced, was presently rendered still worse by a variety of circumstances, all of which materially conduced to the purpose of aggravating their distrefs.

Finding it impossible to withstand fuch a combination of calamities, my father called his creditors together, and divided amongst them his ALL.

His house, his plate, his furniture, and even every superfluity of apparel, was appropriated to a purpose so exemplary; nor did he leave himself the veriest trifle whereupon he might depend for a future subsistence.

All, however, was insufficient.

There were yet remaining several claimants, whose avarice and inhumanity

nity led them to refuse the proferred dividend, and who were determined to abate nothing of their full demand.

My father endeavoured, as well as he could, to pacify them. He had already parted with every thing he was possessed of; and he represented the horrors of his situation to them in a manner that could not fail of drawing compassion from any heart, but such as had bade an everlasting adieu to the feelings of humanity.

Unmoved by whatever he could offer, they remained inflexible in their determinations, which induced him (to avoid the disgrace and misery of a gaol) to quit his home and his connections, and to throw himself upon the care and protection of Providence.

Me he took as the companion of his flight.

My mother, who expected every hour to be delivered, also accompanied him.

The



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The delicacy of her constitution but ill accorded with so violent an exercise as walking. However, as she was fully bent upon sharing the same fate as her husband, she reconciled herself to the difficulties she had to surmount, and bore up with a resolution equally great and uncommon.

An aunt of my mother's, who was possessed of a considerable estate in Hampshire, had, in the days of prosperity, frequently sent pressing invitations to us to come and continue some months with her.

To her it was that our present journey was directed.

"Perhaps, said my father, she may assist us; perhaps she may not so far copy the customs of the world, as to withdraw her friendship from the unhappy. It is, however, worth our while to make the experiment."

At

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At the conclusion of the third day, hungry, fatigued, and exhausted, we reached the end of our journey.

The reception we met with, did not, however, correspond with our wishes.

The news of my father's miscarriages, greatly misrepresented, and turned in every instance to his disadvantage, had, by some accident, got down there before him.

Our good relation, who prided herself upon her prudence, was therefore no sooner informed of our approach, than, without vouchsafing to see us, she gave orders to shut the door against us.

This disappointment affected us the more, inasmuch as it came unexpectedly.

For my part, young as I was, I was heartily tired of my existence, and would gladly, at that hour, have exchanged

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changed conditions with the most servile of my fellow creatures.

To increase our distress, my mother, whose situation was every hour rendered additionally critical, began to manifest signs of her being in labour.

It is impossible for tongue to describe, or even to convey the most distant idea of our sufferings.

They were such as would not admit of increase, They were of themselves sufficient to overbalance the utmost exertions of human fortitude; and they needed no aggravation.

My poor father stood almost petrified with grief.

He was unable to act through excess of affliction.

Every tear, every sigh from his beloved Fanny, planted a dagger in his bosom, and furnished him with the most poignant sensations.

In

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In the mean while, my mother's situation became, every moment, still more alarming.

We were above two miles from any place which bore the least probability of procuring her any assistance.

Without waiting for instructions in a matter which required such immediate attention, I forgot my fatigue, and made all the haste I could towards the neighbouring town, at which I soon arrived, and, with some difficulty, procured a person to attend me to the spot where I had left my unhappy parent, overwhelmed with pain and excessive anguish.

Nowwithstanding it was the latter end of June, the evening was uncommonly dark and cloudy; so that it was not without much labour that I was able to find my way back.

Before I effected it, my mother had brought a daughter into the world at  
the

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 239

the expence of her own life, having survived her delivery scarcely a minute.

Gracious Heaven ! in what manner can I best convey a description of the scene that presented itself to my sight ; a scene rendered infinitely more horrible by the silence and the gloom that invaded us !

My father sitting upon a bank, with his streaming eyes lifted towards Heaven, and his hands folded together !

At his feet lay the dead body of my mother, whose countenance, though pale, still shewed the same piety and resignation which visibly accompanied her actions through the whole course of a long and painful existence ; and near her, carelessly extended upon the cold sward, a new-born infant, struggling against the rude attacks of the evening breeze.

The



The sight was almost too much for me.

With the assistance of the person who attended me, I, however, succeeded in rousing my father from the lethargy of thought into which he was fallen, and prevailed with him to leave the fatal spot, a continuance near which would operate no otherwise than by administering to his sorrows.

Taking with us the infant, and putting ourselves under the guidance of the stranger who attended us, we made all the speed which the frailty of our almost-exhausted nature would permit us, and, in about an hour, we reached Basingstoke, which lay somewhat more than two miles from the scene of my mother's dissolution.



C H A P. XXIV.

AS it was impossible that our poverty should long remain a secret, we, in consequence of its discovery, found it no easy matter to procure the removal of the dead body of my deceased parent from the place in which we had left it.

The child, indeed, by an order of the overseers, was immediately sent to the work-house to be taken care of; and my father and myself were both committed to a house of safety, until we could be passed to the parish unto which we belonged.

But, with respect to my mother, as the ground on which she had died was not expressly within the bounds of their jurisdiction, they refused to pay the least attention to her.

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M

Thus,

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Thus, therefore, to the disgrace of humanity, and the infinite reproach of a civilized people, was the body of my tender my indulgent parent suffered to remain all night, exposed to a thousand evils, and without any other shelter than such as the canopy of Heaven afforded.

My father, in the mean time, worn out with what he had endured, was unable any longer to support himself under the variety of accumulated miseries, which every moment pressed still harder upon him, and strove to weigh him down.

Stretched upon the inhospitable earth, I beheld him as on the eve of existence. I perceived life ebbing away in a manner that betokened a speedy and an easy departure; and the only unhappiness which I experienced on this account, arose from the consideration of the little probability there appeared of my being permitted to accompany him.

As

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As he was fully sensible that he had not much longer to continue with me, with a placid serenity of aspect, he stretched forth his feeble hand, and beckoned me to approach him.

I instantly obeyed the summons.

A dim lamp, obscurely placed in a corner of the wretched apartment in which we were confined, just diffused light sufficient to enable me to distinguish objects.

The moment he perceived me near him, he seized fast hold of my hand, and, in a low, though articulate voice, addressed me in the following pathetic manner :

“ I have, at length, my son, lived to experience the sum, the perfection of human wretchedness. Forsaken by those who called themselves my friends, persecuted by my enemies, stripped of my property, driven from my home, and deprived of my liberty :

M 2 “ Misery

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“ Misery itself can penetrate no further!

“ In the catalogue of my misfortunes, I do not number the loss of my Fanny. Situated as I am, that circumstance ought to be considered rather as a blessing, and as the favour of the Deity, insomuch as I shall shortly meet her where there is neither grief nor sadness, and where all our sufferings will be for ever blotted out.

“ If there is any thing remaining on earth that could induce me to wish a longer continuance on it, it is for thy sake, my son, to protect thy youth from the snares and the dangers which await thee, and to instruct thee in the paths of virtue and of truth.

“ For this, I could yet be content to relinquish my present prospect of happiness, and even to undergo a repetition of those calamities which I have already endured.

“ But it will not be!

“ The

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 245

"The great, the Almighty disposer of events, has ordered otherwise.

"To his care and to his protection do I commit thee.

"He will be to my son, as a father ; and by his providence will he guide thee to the end of thy days.

"Farewel ! May the God of peace shower upon thee the choicest of his blessings. May thy life be long, and thy years be happy. And, finally, mayest thou be a partaker of those joys which are prepared for the just and the righteous in the kingdom of Him who reigneth for ever and ever."

Having thus delivered himself, he let go my hand, and, turning himself gently upon his back, he instantly breathed his last.

Thus, in the course of a few hours, was I robbed of a father and a mother, and surrounded with misfortunes, which,



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till that hour, I had not the faintest conception of.

It was now for the first time that I entirely resigned myself to grief, and, could I, by my prayers and entreaties, have invited a thunder-bolt to have struck me dead, I had not long survived them.

But fate had yet in reserve for me many trials and many difficulties, the necessary preparatives to the ease and happiness which I at present enjoy.

Early the succeeding morning, a servant belonging to the miserable mansion that inclosed us, entered our apartment, where he beheld my poor father stretched at his length upon the bosom of the earth, dead and cold; and myself weeping over him.

Familiarized as he might be to scenes of distress, he was nevertheless visibly affected with that before him. He looked wildly at me, and at the dead body, and



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and then, without uttering a syllable, hastily retired.

In a few minutes the place was crowded by those whom his report had drawn together, rather out of idle and wanton curiosity, than from any motive more worthy, and, having fully satisfied themselves with gazing on us, they forced me away from the corpse over which I still hung, and from which, with the greatest reluctance, I was obliged to depart.

Having conducted me into a place somewhat less horrible than that I had quitted, they left me to myself until they had come to some determination respecting me.

The interval was dreadful !

## C H A P. XXV.

THE particulars of this extraordinary affair, together with the very peculiar circumstances attending it, were presently and rapidly circulated through every part of the town.

A West Indian merchant, with whom my father formerly had some considerable dealings, happened fortunately to be in England, and in the neighbourhood. Amongst others, he also was made acquainted with our unhappy story.

Unlike the generality of mankind, who content themselves with simply affording their pity, he had no sooner learnt my situation, than he flew on the wings of charity to the place of my imprisonment.

I was extended on the ground, and was endeavouring to relieve, in some measure,

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measure, the depression of spirits under which I laboured, by a copious discharge of my tears.

The apparent and unaffected distress that surrounded me, was of itself sufficient to interest his humanity, exclusive of the connection which once subsisted betwixt my father and him, and which could not fail of adding to the concern which he felt for our fate.

By his means I was presently released from my confinement.

Nor did his charity stop here.

My deceased parents were also made partakers in it, and at his expence were they decently and devoutly laid in the earth; the common receptacle for all flesh.

No sooner had he completed this so necessary and benevolent a work, than his thoughts were employed in making provision for my future subsistence. My education had qualified me for almost any station: my diligence and

M 5                      assiduity

250 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

assiduity were great, and my morals unexceptionable.

Having furnished me with whatever he thought might contribute to the establishment of a genteel appearance, he, with my consent, took me with him to Barbadoes, the place of his residence, and where I met with a reception from him equal to my wishes.

Thus, agreeably and happily situated, I continued upwards of five years to give general and universal satisfaction to my employer; in whose esteem and confidence I pleased myself with thinking that I had made no inconsiderable progress.

But now it was that I was once more to know the loss of a parent; for in that character did the kindness and generosity of his behaviour towards me teach me to consider him.

My worthy friend and benefactor was suddenly taken ill.

Ah

THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 231

An epidemical disorder, natural to the island, seized him in so violent a manner as left us but little hopes of his recovery.

The event shewed that our fears were but too justly founded ;

For the third day succeeding that on which he dated his illness, to our irreparable loss, he died.

It would be unnecessary to add what I suffered on the occasion. Suffice it to say that my sorrow was great, and for a time almost unbounded.

My generous patron left me in the full possession of an extensive and lucrative trade, the profits of which were such as could not possibly fail of establishing my fortune in the course of a very few years.

I was never covetous of gain, nor in any respect desirous of accumulating wealth, but for the purpose of assisting those who might stand in need of my help. To such my purse was ever

M 6 open.



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open. It was the voluntary benefaction of a heart, made sensible by experience of the miseries it was anxious to relieve. It was the triumph of sensibility over avarice and selfishness.

Notwithstanding, however, this my indifference with regard to riches, I every day saw myself still more wealthy than the preceding one: my commerce was enlarged; my possessions increased; my credit was ample; and my friends were many.

The favour of the Almighty was visible in my household, and the blessing of his providence prevailed upon my industry.

About a twelvemonth after the decease of my worthy patron, I married a lady who was a native of the island, and with whom I received a very considerable portion.

This union greatly added to the felicity I before enjoyed; and was of so  
pure



pure and refined a nature, that my imagination could not point out one thing the possession of which might, in any measure, add to my satisfaction.

Thus happy as I could wish, and entirely unacquainted with that jarring dissonance of behaviour which invariably tends to the final destruction of domestic quiet, I continued my residence upon the island twelve years longer, by which time my wealth and possessions had so prodigiously increased, that I seriously began to indulge thoughts of retiring from business, and of returning to England.

These thoughts I took an opportunity of imparting to my wife, who readily expressed her willingness to concur with any proposal which might be pleasing to me, and was even pressing with me to carry it into immediate execution.

One

234 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

One reason that, above all others, induced me to wish to return to my native country, was the hopes I conceived of finding my sister, the remembrance of whom would occasionally intrude itself upon my peace, and made me desirous of enquiring after her, that she might become a partaker of that plenty with which Providence had been pleased to bless me.

The pleasure that I experienced in the idea of snatching her from the mean situation in which I naturally expected to find her, was nothing inferior to the greatest the human heart is susceptible of. By the power of imagination I thus anticipated those enjoyments, which the event shewed were more distant than I was led to believe; and which but this very morning I was fearful (after the many fruitless enquiries I had made) that I should never be so happy as to see realized.

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Having

## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 295

Having settled all my affairs, and disposed of my property upon the island, I took an affectionate leave of my old friends and acquaintance, who were exceedingly unwilling to bid me adieu, and, without leaving behind me a single enemy, I embarked for England, where, safe from every accident, I shortly afterwards arrived, having been absent from it considerably more than eighteen years.

CHAP.

254 THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE.

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## THE MAN OF EXPERIENCE. 255

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CHAP.



## C H A P. XXVI.

THE instant I was settled and accommodated agreeable to my wish, I dispatched a trusty messenger into Hampshire, to whom I gave it in charge to make every enquiry concerning my sister.

In about a week from the time of his departure, he returned, and, to my unspeakable sorrow and affliction, informed me, that, after the minutest search, and the most circumstantial enquiry, he had been incapable of procuring other than very imperfect tidings of her, the most material of which were, that she had been, at the usual age, apprenticed by the parish to a farmer in the neighbourhood, with whom she continued three years, at the expiration of which she had, for some misde-

meanor,



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meanor, been committed to prison; and, since her enlargement from whence, no one seemed in the least acquainted with what was become of her.

He likewise informed me that he had made a circuit round the towns and villages adjacent, in hopes of learning something more satisfactory; but all to no purpose. He was unable to gain the least intelligence that might lead to a discovery of her, and thus disappointed in his hopes, after many vain and fruitless endeavours, he returned home to present me with the very insufficient account he had, with difficulty, been able to collect.

It would not be an easy matter to convey a proper idea of the pain and anguish I endured on receiving this information. I had long and fondly indulged myself in imagination that I should soon enjoy the unspeakable happiness of relieving a sister's distresses ;;

treffes; of placing her in a situation that might teach her to forget the miseries with which she had so long been familiar; and of making her partaker with me in the comforts and conveniencies of life.

So fatal a disappointment, therefore, to my hopes and expectations, it is but natural to suppose, must have been the cause of great and uncommon uneasiness to me.

And yet, my sorrow, violent as it was, did in no one respect exceed that of my wife. She had flattered herself with the hopes of meeting with an agreeable companion, who might share with her in the little enjoyments, and the innocent pleasures which she had promised to indulge herself in; and she saw herself cut off from this hope in the very hour of expectation.

Thinking that, perhaps, I might, by a personal enquiry, be somewhat more fortunate

fortunate than my messenger, I made no delay ; but immediately set off myself for the scene of my earliest sorrows.

In the course of a few hours I arrived there.

Every step I took recalled to my memory some circumstance that served to increase my melancholy. This spot bore witness to the death of my mother ; that, to the irreparable loss of my father. Here it was I experienced the inhumanity of a relation ; and there, I was snatched from the very brink of despair, by the disinterested charity of a stranger.

My fancy was thus so much engrossed by the recollection of circumstances and events so antecedent, that I had nearly forgot the business upon which I came.

Having, however, made what enquiry I could concerning my sister, I soon found that there was indeed but

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too great reason to conclude that I should never more behold her.

The information I had before received amounted to the full sum of all I was able to gather, after a personal search of several months, conducted with the greatest care and assiduity.

Perceiving, therefore, that it would be in vain to continue any longer so unprofitable a pursuit, I returned home, and, reposing all my hopes upon the care and the providence of the Almighty, I patiently waited his good time for the perfection of a work, which, without his peculiar direction, had never been thus wonderfully accomplished.

In somewhat less than two years after my return to England, I was doomed to the experience of a new affliction, by the sudden and unexpected death of my wife.

Without any visible cause, whereby to account for so fatal an incident, and  
without

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without the least complaint on her part, she dropped like fruit that is ripe, though only in the bloom of youth, and in the prime of her days.

But I was now so accustomed to events of this sort, that I humbled myself to Heaven, in perfect resignation of the divine will, acknowledging the mercy of the Deity, in not having suffered her to linger in torment and misery.

We had been married upwards of fourteen years, in all which time she seemed to harbour no other desire than that of contributing to my satisfaction and happiness. She had no will; no choice but mine: no pleasures but such as I was a partaker in: nor did she profess any rule of conduct but what had previously received the peculiar sanction of my approbation.

The only circumstance that ever gave us the least cause of real uneasiness was,  
our



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our having no child to inherit the very extensive fortune we were in possession of. We wished this had been otherwise. However, we saw it was the will of Heaven, and we therefore endeavoured, as was our duty, to reconcile ourselves to its dispensations.

And now being, as it were, left alone, I became more than ever desirous of learning what was become of my sister.

For this purpose I quitted my home, and visited every part and corner of the kingdom which bore the least probability of affording me the information I so eagerly coveted.

But all was in vain.

After having travelled several hundred miles, and after having made trial of every device, and of every stratagem, to get at the knowledge of a circumstance upon which so materially depended my happiness, I was at last under



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der the necessity of giving over the pursuit, and of returning as I set out.

Since this period I have mostly led a private and retired life, and may now say that I am arrived to the full perfection of all my wishes; having, after the wonders I have been an interested witness of, this day, nothing left either to hope for or to desire.

END OF VOL. I.